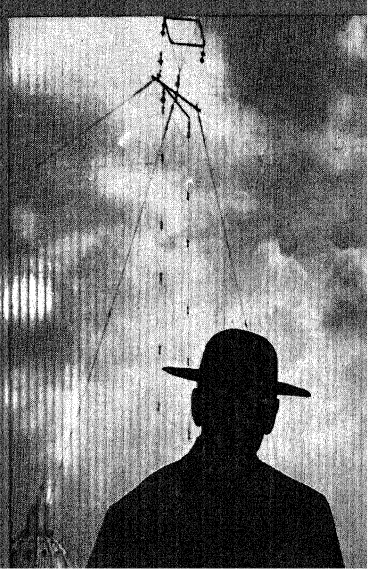
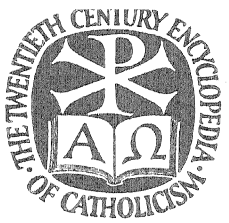
LOUIS AND ANDRE RETIF

THE CHURCH'S MISSION IN THE WORLD



THE TWENTIETH CENTURY ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CATHOLICISM



$3.50
TCMITW

The Church's Mission in the World

By LOUIS and ANDRÉ RÉTIF

TRANSLATED BY REGINALD F. TREVETT

The Church must answer the especial challenge of each new age or it will not continue to flourish. And nowhere is this more true than when it attempts to fulfill the words of Christ: "Go therefore and teach all nations." Fathers André and Louis Rétif here re-define the nature of the modern challenge and the new responses of the Church.

No longer can missionaries follow Western colonists into mission lands. Too often have the newly emergent nations of the world identified the missioners with an alien culture. And in rejecting the old imperialism, they have tended to reject Christianity as well.

The modern missionary must belong to the particular world he is to evangelize. Prototypes appear in the persons of Teilhard de Chardin and Charles de Foucauld. Father

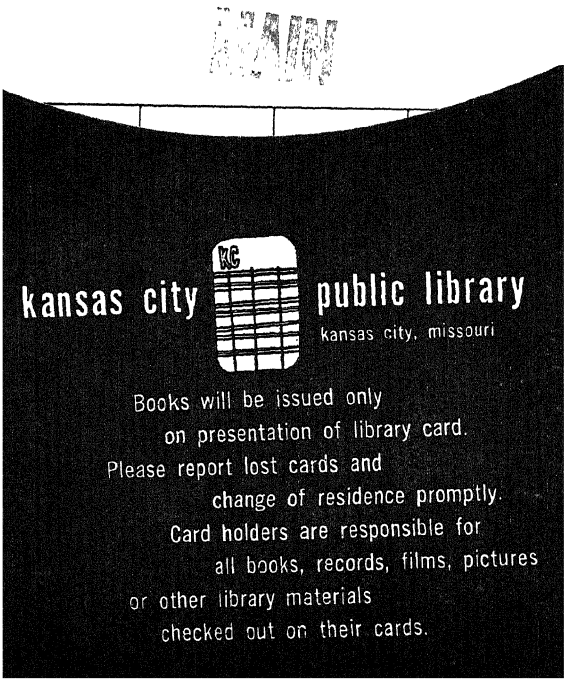
(continued on back flap)

Jacket Design by Stefan Salter
Bishop Sheen at the Vatican Radio Station

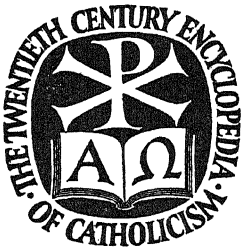
KANSAS CITY, MO PUBLIC LIBRARY
0 0001 0301906 3

266.2 R43c 62-10774
Retif
The church's mission in the
world

266.2 R43c 62-10774
Retif $3.50
The church's mission in the
world


kansas city public library
kansas city, missouri
Books will be issued only
on presentation of library card.
Please report lost cards and
change of residence promptly.
Card holders are responsible for
all books, records, films, pictures
or other library materials
checked out on their cards.

DATE DUE



Edited by HENRI DANIEL-ROPS of the Académie Française

THE CHURCH'S MISSION IN THE WORLD

By LOUIS and ANDRÉ RÉTIF

Translated from the French by REGINALD F. TREVETT

HAWTHORN BOOKS · PUBLISHERS · *New York*

Copyright © 1962 by Hawthorn Books, Inc., 70 Fifth Avenue, New York City 11. Copyright under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. Philippines Copyright 1962 by Hawthorn Books, Inc. All rights reserved, including the right to reproduce this book, or portions thereof, in any form, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review. This book was manufactured in the United States of America and published simultaneously in Canada by McClelland & Stewart, Ltd., 25 Hollinger Road, Toronto 16. It was originally published in France under the title *Pour une Église en état de Mission,* © Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1961. The Library of Congress has catalogued the Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism under card number 58-14327. Library of Congress Catalogue Card Number for this volume: 62-11414. The Catholic University of America has catalogued this volume based on the Lynn-Peterson Alternative Classification for Catholic Books: BQT184.T9v.102/BQT 322.R43. Suggested decimal classification: 261.

First Edition, April, 1962

NIHIL OBSTAT

Daniel Duivesteijn, S.T.D.

Censor Deputatus

IMPRIMATUR

E. Morrogh Bernard

Vicarius Generalis

Westmonasterii, die XXIII JANUARII MCMLXII

The Nihil obstat and Imprimatur are a declaration that a book or pamphlet is considered to be free from doctrinal or moral error. It is not implied that those who have granted the Nihil obstat and Imprimatur agree with the contents, opinions, or statements expressed.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 7

PART I: THE WORLD'S NEW AGE

I. SOCIALIZATION AND THE PHENOMENON OF MIGRATION 19
Technology and Man 20
Civilization and Migration 23

II. MODERN CONSCIOUSNESS AND CHRISTIAN AWARENESS 28
The Dimensions of Contemporary Consciousness 30
Stages and States of Awareness 32
The Values of the Modern World and the Christian Faith 35
The Fundamental Values of Work and of International Life 38

PART II: AN EXCEPTIONAL MISSIONARY SITUATION

III. THE CHURCH AND THE GREAT CONTEMPORARY MOVEMENTS 45
A World Standing on Its Own Feet 46
Religious Revivals and Nationalism 49
Our Handicaps 53
Countries in Course of Development 57
The World of Science and Technology 59
The World of Workers Is a Missionary Field 62

IV. DECHRISTIANIZATION, DESACRALIZATION AND ATHEISM 66
Dechristianization and Non-Christianization 67

The Desacralization of Our Institutions 73
Atheism as a Factor in Civilization 78
The Religious Meaning of the Marxist Phenomenon 82

PART III: A NEW MISSIONARY ERA

V. THE MISSION AND THE MISSIONS 89
The Mission and Catholicity 93
A Turning-Point in the Church's Missionary Task 95
The Foreign and the Home Missions 97
The Problems of Foreign Missions 99

VI. THE PRIEST WORKERS, ONE TYPE OF HOME MISSION 102
Towards a Pastoral Method Adapted to Our Times 110
Missionary Parishes 111
The Liturgical Movement and Missionary Effort 115
Operation "Charity" and the Mission 116
The Call to Missionary Work 118

CONCLUSION: A MISSIONARY CHURCH 123
The Third Revolution 126
The Struggle in the Church 129
The Living Organisms of the Church: Priests and Laity 133
A New World Needs a New Mission 136
Towards a Priesthood Which Can Face the Challenge of Our Time 138
A Collegiate Episcopate 143
Towards the Mission: The Preliminaries 144
A New Type of Apostle: "The Premissionary" 146
The Premission in the Future: the Advent of the Nations 152
Beyond the Diagnosis of the Sociologists 154

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY 157

INTRODUCTION

We cannot do better than begin with two quotations from the late Cardinal Suhard:

> Today the Church asks two things of us: *broad-minded* thinking and *rapid* thinking. Broad-minded: our thought is to be as wide as the world. Do not be content to follow others, take the lead. Do not be only disciples, be masters. It is not enough to imitate, you must be inventors. But if you are to do this, and here I use all the emphasis I can, you must think quickly. The times are gone when culture was distilled drop by drop in the alchemist's cell or in the peaceful libraries of the cloister. We have discovered speed, but it has broken away from us and now we have to run after it. We have started a movement and we do not know when nor where it will stop. The only thing we are sure of is that it becomes faster and faster and that its dimensions alone take our breath away (*Semaine des Intellectuels Catholiques*, 1948).
>
> Do not be afraid of becoming less Christian the more human you are. Each new conquest over the world is a province you are annexing to the universal domain of Christ the King. The pope's orders are clear: The Church cannot shut herself away and remain inert in the confines of her places of worship and so abandon the mission entrusted to her by Divine Providence, the formation of the whole man.
>
> We must go to it, we must get to work. Do not stand idle amid the ruins. We know what we have to do. We must not only be present in the world. We must work for its progress. I charge you then: go forward, work to build a new world. Whether it is to be Christian or not depends on you (Pastoral Letter, *Essor ou déclin de l'Eglise*).

These appeals are now more than ever those of the whole Church and they are enough to justify this book by a parish priest and a student of the missions on the present state of

the work of evangelization. Further, the fact that an Ecumenical Council is to meet and that it should be a landmark in the history of the Church undoubtedly gives this attempt at a diagnosis a particularly relevant character.

The exceptional speed of historical development forces us to recognize that today more than ever, in the Church and outside her, men's minds in general lag behind their institutions and their institutions lag behind the problems of the day. This twofold time lag gives the Church today a double task. She has to encourage an evolution in the minds of Christians as they face the missionary situation in the modern world, and she has to provide with speed eccleciastical institutions adapted to the needs of the time. To use Cardinal Suhard's words, she has to "organize herself on a missionary basis".

A quick glance at the changing aspect of the contemporary world will make it possible to approach the vast problem of the present missionary prospects of the Church. All we can do here however is to provide a rough sketch of their general outline.

The characteristic feature of the evolution of mankind today would seem to be its increasing momentum and its world-wide dimensions. The six last decades have produced more upheavals than the six preceding centuries, and no doubt the next ten years will provide us with numerous surprises.[1]

Man can travel faster than the speed of sound. The pilotless teleguided or autoguided plane does away with the

[1] If we wish to have a better idea of this increased momentum in the evolution of thought and technology, we have only to realize that any average man who died only thirty years ago knew nothing of what is conveyed to us by a list of words as familiar and as varied as: jet plane, radar, sound barrier, jeep, prefabricated house, refrigerator, guided missiles, nylon, triplex glass, bulldozer, electric typewriter, cinemascope, colour television, micro-groove, frequency modulation, *musique concrète*, transistor, automatic coupling, penicillin, frozen vegetables, washing machine, atomic bomb, etc.

hazard of human failings in this journey through space. The era of artificial satellites has now begun and the way is open for rivalry between the nations in the conquest of interplanetary space, while the radiotelescope, as one astronomer maintains, will soon be able to reach the furthest limits of the universe, and the electronic microscope with its two wavelengths makes possible a magnification of 26 million times and a photograph of the atom. The sea has been explored to a depth of 10,000 metres, and the *Nautilus* uses atomic energy to sail under the waters of the ocean and the ice of the Pole. Man is winning his race against time and space in his daily life, automation is about to revolutionize to a considerable extent the conditions of work, although it is not possible to foresee its repercussions on the lives of the workers.[2] One mechanic driving a bulldozer makes it do the work of three hundred labourers. Calculating machines and electronic brains are constantly perfected and are already able to perform operations which yesterday's calculators would never have believed possible.

Over the past 150 years technical progress has increasingly shaken to its foundations the framework of the Western world and it promises an era of staggering upheavals in the future. There exists no theoretical limit to human power. Even death may be challenged. Technology has taken the place of biological evolution.

"The world", said Einstein to Abbé Pierre, "is being shaken by three explosions: atomic, biological and psychological."

The first of these may only be in its initial stages, nevertheless it has had a profoundly disturbing effect on the conditions of human life. The second also gives man a terrible power; he can use it but he does not know what its repercussions are. Biological discoveries affect the most secret and the

[2] In the U.S.A., fourteen automatic machines produce ninety per cent of the production of electric bulbs, television and radio valves, and each machine is supervised by one man.

most carefully protected vital forces.[3] The third (the exploration of the unconscious, the development of the techniques of social psychology, the perfecting of drugs that have a chemical action on the physical bases of the human psyche) offers promises of deliverance and threats of enslavement of primordial importance at a time when psychic problems are becoming increasingly grave.

Fr Dubarle, after the first flights made by artificial satellites, declared: "Science has completed its own revolution. It is now revolutionizing man." He intended in this way to point out the active link between science and the daily life of mankind on a world-wide scale.

> The entirely new fact in our time is the increasing effect on everybody of a power which up till now affected only limited sectors of the human race. Everybody is now plunged so to speak in a bath of technology and science.... Science therefore is of universal relevance to man, it takes root in his life, is his servant; but it also modifies society, mental attitudes, mass psychology, men's way of life.

We cannot close our eyes to the fact that this evolution with its ever-increasing speed, reaching every part of the world, thanks in particular to modern communications and such sound and visual techniques as radio and television, will alter the whole human condition. As a result of this new

[3] Surgery has an immense future before it. We have already read in the newspapers of the operation for "blue" babies, the methods for reviving the beating of the heart, painless childbirth, deep freeze, plastic surgery, leucotomy, the artificial lung, the grafting of the eardrum, surgery without the use of the lancet which is replaced by converging beams of highly charged ultrasonic waves.

Scientists such as Jean Rostand provide us with hints of developments that could not even have been imagined twenty years ago: "In the near future, our own children will be material for experiment. Their sex will be predetermined; by the use of supplementary hormones they will be given a physical and moral personality.... We may well be near the day when children will be born without a father. ... There is reason for man to be enthusiastic and proud of himself, we are justified in adopting a completely optimistic view, the future will be full of wonders. Unlimited progress lies ahead."

situation there is a broadening of personal life and a general level of existence which could not have been even imagined only thirty years ago.

True, this wealth of knowledge is far from being the common property of all the nations: the standard of living offered by industrial techniques is far from being universally achieved. But it is nevertheless a fact that the popularization of scientific knowledge is making the masses, whether in France or in Russia, familiar with a new way of thinking and understanding. Science and technology bring pictures and music, news and catchwords into the home where they impregnate and transform man's thinking and his existence. The policy of the heads of State in Iraq, Ghana and Ethiopia, etc., also aims at giving their peoples a standard of life which will be the outcome of a technological civilization henceforth universal.

This progress of mankind towards world unity and the mastery of the universe is not without its quota of difficulties and sufferings. This crisis in the process of growth is unprecedented in history and has been described many times during the past few years:

> Our world is threatened by a crisis whose dimensions seem to escape those who have the power to take great decisions either for good or ill. The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything except our ways of thinking and we are slipping towards unprecedented catastrophes. If mankind is to survive, a new kind of thought is essential.

This solemn warning of Einstein's in April, 1954, is echoed by Pius XII in his 1956 Christmas message. Reminding us of the contradictions in human nature he said:

> A flagrant contradiction weighs down upon the human race in the twentieth century and is like a wound to its pride. On the one hand there is this confidence in modern man as the author and the spectator of a superabundance of riches, and freed from poverty and insecurity. On the other hand, there is the bitter reality of the long years of war and of ruin together with the fear to which it gives rise.... Will modern

man succeed in resolving, and first and foremost in his own depths, the agonizing contradiction of which he is both the author and the victim?

Yet in spite of the uncertainties which weigh down upon man's evolution, and even through the vicissitudes of a crisis in his growth, the movement which urges man onward is irreversible and universal. The progress of technology is hastening the process of unification between the nations and a general levelling of ways of life. The nations are already linked in an international organization which safeguards the independence of each of its members, and they seem to be anxious to form supra-national groups even if this means a partial surrender of their own autonomy.

But what is taking shape as a result of this obscure interpenetration? How are we today to descry the characteristics of the man of the future; the channels into which man's energies will flow once they are freed by the automatization of work and social relationships; the cultural demands of the "age of leisure" which lies over our horizon? The most we can do is to glimpse some of the main outlines. Thus Canon Laloup during the twenty-ninth *Semaine de Missiologie de Louvain* attempted to define the humanism of tomorrow:

> For a long time to come the exact sciences will continue to be the fine point of the world's intellectual culture. It is, however, unlikely that their diffusion will itself do away with the pseudo-philosophical pretensions in them which have been only too well known. Gradually in our Western countries, they are becoming recognized as a useful instrument of knowledge and not as a general explanation of the universe and of mankind. In the ancient civilizations of Asia, to take another example, they will encounter (and they already do so) mystical and philosophical conceptions which do not take at all kindly to exaggerated scientific claims and to positivism. The cultured Indian and Chinese will be slower to fall for the temptation offered by "science, the ultimate key to all mysteries".

No one knows what the human race, now in the process of a profound transformation, will eventually be like but, if we

are accurately to assess the religious phenomenon in the twentieth century, we must bear in mind the possible course of the race's evolution in the constantly changing context of our times.

This awareness of the unity of the race is developing in the historical context of a widespread disbelief, so that the unity in the process of formation appears as a challenge to the catholicity of the Church.

The movement towards unification in the institutions and mentality of the modern world involves a refusal of God and denies that the Church has a mission to reconcile men with each other in the name of Jesus Christ. It claims that without God's help it will build the new Tower of Babel which will crown man's work, and that man will owe his salvation to no one but himself.

The world-wide character of contemporary paganism thus denies the universality of the Church in both the sociological and the geographical spheres, as we shall see in the following chapters. According to Adrien Dansette, Catholicism is losing some of its Catholicity and the religious potential of mankind now meets a massive and blunt refusal on the part of the proletariat and the young nationalist movements overseas.

If we are to understand the Church's answer to the challenge from the nations, we must first restate the nature of the Church's Catholicity. "This gospel of the kingdom must first be preached all over the world, so that all nations may hear the truth" (Matt. 24. 14, cf. Mark 13. 10 and 14. 15; Matt. 27. 19; Acts 1. 8).

This universal work of the Church began at Pentecost as a mission entrusted by Christ on his own authority to the first apostles, so that the Good News might be brought to the whole world.[4] And at the first Council Peter declared that

[4] The manifestation of the Church's universality has always been linked with the historical development of a human race growing gradually more aware of itself, but Catholicity, as a mark of the Church, is a gift of God and belongs to the realm of faith. We must

God had not treated the Gentiles differently from the Jews since he had given the Holy Spirit to the former as well as to the children of the chosen people (Acts 15. 7–9).

"You are to be my witnesses . . . to the ends of the earth." And St Paul travelled resolutely to the Mediterranean limits of the then known world. It is not without significance that the Acts of the Apostles ends with his death in Rome. From Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, to pagan Rome the Gospel was preached during the first Christian generation and the mission was in full process of fulfilment. Paul could write with legitimate pride to the Romans: "But, tell me, did the news never come to them? Why, yes; the utterance fills every land, the message reaches the ends of the world" (Rom. 10. 18).

"You, therefore, must go out, making disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28. 19). At each period of history the Church is thus commanded as the Body of Christ to perform the essential task of evangelizing the non-Christian world so that the salvation already wrought by Jesus Christ but not yet fully manifested may be brought to all men.

"No more Jew or Gentile, no more slave and freeman, no more male and female; you are all one person in Jesus Christ" (Gal. 3. 28). Christ alone, by freeing men from sin, achieves the universal solidarity of a human race called to enter the family of the Father himself. This is why the Church has a duty to go to all mankind and to affect the whole personality of every man. She is to be the Church of every nation and of every race. Her Catholicity is both geographical and interior. Baptism is Christ's grip upon all that is human and he takes it to himself for the glory of the Holy Trinity. Throughout her history the Church, faithful to her essential mission, has gone forth, as we shall see, to meet the non-Christian peoples and to preach Jesus Christ to them. But her missionary pro-

never confuse these two levels any more than we do the evolution of mankind and that of God's people, the evolution which leads a divided human race to become conscious of its unity and that which is concerned with the increase of God's kingdom.

ject in the face of very varied historical circumstances has not always been crowned with the same success.

Today a new world with a deeply rooted character of its own meets this missionary project with an unqualified refusal. The traditionally Catholic powers of the West have lost their political leadership in the secular sphere at the time when the evolution of increasingly efficient technical inventions has brought into existence a community of peoples *on a world-wide scale*. The universal awakening of nationalist aspirations in the underdeveloped countries has disturbed the balance of power among the nations. Paganism is on the increase in every continent. It finds its allies either in rational materialism or in a practical materialism which has a corrosive effect on those minorities which have remained Christian.

There is therefore a religious crisis which affects not only Catholicism but the religions of the world as a whole, while the masses of every country in the process of expansion show a growing interest in Marxism which they consider far more effective. On the other hand, among the élites who have been led to reassess traditional values, there is an obvious religious reawakening, their faith is undergoing a process of purification, there is a return to its living sources, a deepening understanding of Revelation. Fr Maydieu calls this "the spiritual 'mutation' of the world". The Church borne along by a world in the process of unification finds herself of necessity obliged more than ever to examine her own "Catholic" vocation,[5] to treat her missionary work with the utmost seriousness.

[5] "The first opportunity is perhaps offered by the kind of compulsion we experience as a global world evolves and expands. It forces us to face the hard facts of the purely relative historical and geographical character of the institutions and of the neutrality which I have previously described as Constantinian. The way the world is moving obliges the Church to be catholic in the literal sense of the word. The very word 'catholic' is recovering its original sense of 'universal' instead of remaining confined within the 'Catholic-Protestant' pair of opposites. The latter is still valid but today its importance is outweighed by the urgent need for the Church to be universal" (Fr Chenu, O.P.).

There are signs that this preoccupation with the missions is present in the contemporary Church. Among the most significant events affecting the Catholicity of the Church, we may point out the encyclical *Fidei Donum* and the Ecumenical Council.

Pius XII's encyclical *Fidei Donum*, while calling attention to the evangelization of Africa, reminded the bishops of the reality of the apostolic succession and of their collegiate responsibility in communion with the Vicar of Christ for the Christianization of the world. "Although each bishop is the pastor properly speaking only of that portion of the flock entrusted to his care, yet in his capacity as a legitimate successor of the apostles by divine institution, he is responsible for the apostolic mission of the Church."

The Ecumenical Council summoned by John XXIII has been called the most important religious event of modern times. This at least is the opinion of those who see beyond the interest that will be aroused by the 2,800 bishops of the whole world assembled together, and who know what immense hope may be awakened in the human race by a Church which, as John XXIII himself has said, will be revealed to men in all her splendour. The Council is a challenge to us all, so true is it that, in the final analysis, its ultimate effect depends on an upsurge of faith in all believers.

At the heart of this question, in this interplanetary age, there is at stake the discovery of how the Church, in a world in the full flood of an industrial revolution and in the pride of its discoveries in the field of nature and in the universe itself, will preach the Good News of that salvation whose Alpha and Omega is Jesus Christ.

PART I

THE WORLD'S NEW AGE

CHAPTER I

SOCIALIZATION AND THE PHENOMENON OF MIGRATION

Before we return to the typically missionary situation existing today, we must attempt to grasp the character of the new cultural world both in its institutions and its awareness. We shall confine ourselves to the phenomena of socialization and migration as characteristic of a period in which changes are taking place at an increasing speed.

The industrial era speeds up a process of socialization whose effects on human personality are considerable.[1] Socialization must not be confused with collectivism in the economic sphere or with political socialism. By socialization we mean the general movement of the human race fulfilling its potentialities by means of corporate organizations such as family movements, distributive companies, institutions and the State.

Whether for the purposes of organizing and defending a trade or profession, for the encouragement of culture and of adequate leisure, whether the group in question offers a free choice (associations, trade unions) or is obligatory (member-

[1] "The socialization to which mankind seems summoned does not in any sense mean the end of the era of the human person upon the earth but rather its beginning" (Teilhard de Chardin, *L'Avenir de l'homme*, p. 75).

ship of a national insurance scheme), this process of socialization encloses the individual in a social net which presses round him on all sides and creates a new kind of man. The specific achievement of socialization, when it is not diverted from its course for the profit of usurping totalitarian régimes, is that it encourages individuals and groups to become part of these corporate organizations. Socialization presents its dangers but also its opportunities. We all realize the doubtful character of a socialization which can either debase or develop human personality. The death camps, the degrading character of working conditions, are evidence of the blow dealt in our times at the dignity of the person in the name of so-called collective purposes. On the other hand, there exists a common front in which all the nations join, against hunger, slums and catastrophes. Education and health have become the responsibility of the public, children and old people are protected, there is an attempt to organize peace, and the standard of living is on the up-grade: all this witnesses to the fact that in not a few countries there is progress in the sphere of collective life and at the same time greater attention is paid to the needs of the individual person.

In the early days of the technological era, society was no more than the organization of individual security in a context of social insecurity. Everything was for the advantage of the individual who nevertheless found himself too often left to his own resources.

Now that the technological era is established, society tends towards social security, but there is a sense in which individual security is threatened. Social security, a good thing in itself, is not without risks for the human person. We propose to give a few examples of the power of technology over man and of the ways in which it may hinder the development of the person.

TECHNOLOGY AND MAN

The audio-visual techniques as vehicles of news dissemination, culture and entertainment, influence men's minds

without in most cases educating their awareness. A "picture" civilization is gradually ousting a "book" civilization. Man today sees the world in a different light from the man of yesterday. His way of thinking and judging, his inner vision of men and of events are imperceptibly undergoing a process of change which cannot fail to alter his code of behaviour.

The cinema, a cultural instrument with immense possibilities, is a machine which manufactures dreams and disposes the mind to accept magical, mythological and illusory views on life.

The weekly magazines for light reading are far more widely read than the political or religious weeklies in the ratio of 8 to 1. The newspaper is the daily pabulum of millions who have no standard of judgement other than its prejudices. Many of them think as they cast their eyes down its pages: "My paper has the same ideas as I have", when it would be more accurate to say: "My ideas are those of my paper." When we know how some daily papers are put together, how cleverly, for instance, an editorial board which owns two dailies weighs out its news to suit a right-wing or a left-wing body of readers, when we know the commercial interests involved and the various influences brought to bear, how can we fail to fear that a few newspaper magnates may enslave men's personalities?

In this world of daily life, one image drives away another, the day before yesterday's paper is already out of date, and today's picture makes us impatient to see tomorrow's. The whole of life is swept along at an increasing speed and becomes an unending scenario, a state of nervous tension, a state of saturation and of anxiety at one and the same time.

Television and radio, by increasing our sources of information and culture, strengthen in the home the forces that are brought to bear on us outside it: propaganda, escapism and idol-worship of all kinds as well as a sense of solidarity with the race as a whole. When pictures are the death of reading, when radio interferes with communications between the

members of the family, when noise drives out meditation, then man is threatened in the inmost centre of his being.

Publicity "no longer manufactures products to meet men's needs, but needs to provide an outlet for products" (R. Lacroix). As Vance Packard says, we no longer buy oranges but "vitality". Buying a car is buying prestige (that is why, according to a psychiatric survey, so many Americans buy a new and more powerful car every two years). Life insurance, according to the specialists of the R.M. (*Recherches des Mobiles*, that is, motivation research) is an answer to the "furious desire to become immortal and so to manage one's family after one's death". "The 60,000,000 American women who go every week to the Supermarkets are 'helped' in their purchases (and their 'superfluous purchases') by psychologists and psychiatrists employed by the catering industry" (V. Packard). In this connection, here is an interesting detail: the fluttering of housewives' eyelashes in front of the windows of stores where everything is sold at the same price, has been filmed and counted. The customers who are most affected go into a kind of trance which is the first stage of hypnosis.

Publicity as the folklore of industrial civilization calls for discrimination and reservations.

Hire purchase has developed considerably. Frenchmen make use of it in ten per cent of their purchases (the figure in the U.S.A. is sixty per cent). The refrigerator, the television, the small car, the knitting machine are made available by house-to-house canvassers who are as skilful as they are persistent. The word "debt" is no longer used, instead we have "deferred payments", "hire-purchase", "an opportunity to own property" or "payment by instalments". The recurring dates for payment make illness and unemployment an additional hazard.

The simplification of the series of operations required in manufacture by means of automation and electronic machinery, the increased productivity resulting from the perfecting of synthetic materials and organic raw materials foreshadows

a radical transformation of industry, an era of leisure and culture.

> Our world is evolving towards a more universal and more deep-seated socialization. The individual is encircled, supported and guided not only by economic and political organizations but by a whole network of customs, ways of life and *ad hoc* or legal institutions. The advantages accruing from this state of affairs are undeniable both in the economic and social sphere and in the realm of culture (Letter of the Vatican Secretariat of State to the *Semaines Sociales*, held at Grenoble, July 1960).

Catholic Action in the various sectors of society, by emphasizing the need for christianizing these organizations, has taken up a position which makes it possible for the Church to be on the spot as this contemporary process of socialization begins. But Christians as a whole are far from being aware of the issues raised by this social context in which man is involved for better or for worse.

CIVILIZATION AND MIGRATION

It has been said that the major trial of the men of our time is migration.[2]

It is true at least that the speed with which institutions are changing, the break with the way of life of the past, the scale of migration, the movement from the country to the town, the ever-expanding tentacles of industrial agglomerations, the number of people displaced by wars between nations, the sense of loss experienced by those who are to

[2] The characteristic mark of this migration is change and discontinuity. The danger inherent in contemporary migration is that we may become less aware of our relations with our neighbours and of the values involved in our daily round and in the secret places of our lives in proportion as we become more aware of the new discoveries on our planet, of the conquest of its space, of our relationship with those who live at a great distance from us. All these experiences fill us with an adolescent sense of wonder (R. Delavignette, *Birama*).

a greater or lesser extent uprooted, are the elements of this vast universe which developing technology is creating as the framework of our lives.

Emigration continues almost without interruption. In France alone a total of 150,000 foreigners from 80 different countries, under the urge of hope or fear, come each year to join the 2,000,000 foreigners already settled on our territory. Four hundred thousand of them are refugees. Whether they are from Barcelona, Naples or Sarajevo, whether they are Armenians, Chinese, Hungarians, Germans or Africans, whether they ask for naturalization or not, whether they settle permanently or for a long period, they are a mass of workers and students who bear the marks of their uprooted life and who are more or less able to adapt themselves to their new surroundings.

But this emigration of displaced groups throughout the world is one aspect of a more fundamental phenomenon which enlarges the sphere in which the process of dehumanization is at work.

And this is the urbanization of the world. Urbanization is a phenomenon of recent date and is the consequence of the concentration of industry and of the movement from the country to the town.

> While in the 150 years from 1800 to 1950, the population of Paris increased from 500,000 to 3,000,000, that is, in the ratio of 6 to 1; while the population of Brussels passed from 60,000 to 880,000 (ratio 13 to 1), Buenos Aires jumped from 40,000 to 3,200,000—an increase of 8000 per cent and Sao Paulo in the same period multiplied its population by 148 (15,000 to 2,300,000). The whole of Latin America has been caught up in this movement. A profound transformation has been taking place in this area over the past five years. The South American continent has changed suddenly from a rural to an urban and industrial type of life. Hence a threefold movement: the great masses of the rural population are emigrating to the urban centres, the individual has to adapt himself to new trades, and new classes are in process of formation or those which already

existed are being injected with new and dynamic elements (Mgr Latrain: *Terre d'angoisse et d'espérance: L'Amérique latine*).

In our country nothing is more significant than the precarious position of the countryman emigrating to the large town. The town, so it would seem, is able to satisfy all the legitimate needs of men who want security, relaxation and culture. It offers them work, housing, technical schools for their children, sport, cinemas, theatres, television. But if they find themselves without friends and without money, they will experience the worst form of uprooting, they will have to endure a loneliness which borders on pathological anxiety, and they gain the impression that nobody wants them. In addition to these results of the movement from the country to the town, there is another form of uprooting due sometimes to the conditions of work and often enough to the shortage of housing in a given town, in one area of it as compared with another, in one suburb in contrast to another.

As he stands on the threshold of a realm he is forbidden to enter, man, like a child of poor parents before a shop front full of Christmas toys, may mutter: "This is not for me." And when he enters this world of ever-increasing speed, he discovers that he is not suited to its way of life or its habits of thought. The great anonymous City, the symbol of the all-pervading technological organization of the world, like a giant, pitilessly crushes his country habits, his ancestral beliefs and even makes him a stranger to himself. Those who claim that they are most fitted for this migratory form of civilization, men whose forbears have lived for generations in the towns, often show signs of diminishing vitality and it is among them that neuroses flourish.

Finally, sociologists in their analysis of the phenomenon of present-day migration even go so far as to describe every city dweller as a migrant because of this influx of people from the country, the continual moving in and out, the uprooted character of the modern City, and the perpetual social

instability, all of which are inseparable from these changes of residence, work and types of trade.

The effect on man of what have been called "the great housing blocks", the symptoms of uprootedness and the sense of loss found among people who have to live in mass centres of population, form the subject of a large number of studies by sociologists who are interested in the profound psychological and social repercussions of life in large blocks of flats. Recent town-planning has attempted to avoid the more inhuman aspects of the earlier buildings by providing soundproof rooms, playgrounds for the children, grass verges, police regulations against noise, smoke and certain sorts of promiscuity.

Finally, we must take into account the contrary movement towards the transformation of rural industrialized areas. In cases such as those of a car factory, of an electronics establishment, of the sinking of oil-wells, of atomic energy plants or nuclear power stations, adaptation is difficult both for the country people and for those from the town. In the country, modern methods of cultivation which involve both a greater control over production and a policy of regulation and stockpiling, of sales and export, have already had immense repercussions on the mentality of the countryman. The farmer who has adopted modern methods loses his inferiority complex in relation to the towns. Individualism gives way to a spirit of cooperation and the peasant feels that he, like other men, is becoming a man of the twentieth century.

The symbol of this gigantic migration of twentieth-century man may well be the new capital of Brazil, Brasilia, that pilot scheme of town-planning. Here we have the capital city of the year 2000. This desert city will act as the jumping-off ground for the conquest of Brazil by the Brazilians. The bold yet practical ideas utilized in its planning, its new style of architecture with its curved lines, its streets at different levels and so without crossings, its immense green spaces, indicate that the man of tomorrow will seek to find himself in an endless

succession of change, in the search for a Promised Land. If his path goes through the desert, his present exodus is nonetheless the sign of a forward march which it is the duty of the Church to lead just as Moses long ago led his people towards the land of Canaan.

CHAPTER II

MODERN CONSCIOUSNESS AND CHRISTIAN AWARENESS

Faith can only be an act of consciousness and evangelization has to be described in terms of personal relationship with our Lord. Men's consciousness is not a territory we have to colonize. The evangelist's first move is to meet the person he is evangelizing at the level of the latter's consciousness, to place himself and the person to whom he is talking in the presence of the consciousness of Jesus Christ, for Jesus Christ is the meeting place at which men enter into communication with each other. It is the Gospel of Jesus Christ which is the Message that has been delivered and the secret that has been entrusted to mankind.

The most Christian consciousness is that which is entirely at the disposal of Jesus Christ, in the service of Jesus Christ, in union with Christ's will to save the world of today. And, strictly speaking, it is within man's consciousness, at the heart of the mystery of man, that the true realm of unbelief is found.

It is obvious that it is not enough to call oneself a Catholic in order to have a Catholic consciousness. It is at the level of consciousness and not on mere hearsay evidence that we are called upon to identify the action of Christ. One man

may proudly tell us that he is a believer whereas he is merely superstitious. Another calls himself an unbeliever when he is really only anticlerical. Labels require to be scrutinized. The faith of some men has been devalued to a greater extent than they admit while that of others has a stronger religious content than they think. It is to the religious consciousness that we must look for it is the true criterion of faith and makes it possible to estimate what the religious future of a nation will be.

Yet this development of a Catholic consciousness in the Church proceeds in different ways according to the intentions of the Holy Spirit, who is the sole foundation of spiritual unity. Under his inspiration, the christianization of the various zones of consciousness continues, from the level of the family to that of political life, from the social level to that of economics. One man may have a religious consciousness in regard to family life and yet have no sense of the political implications of his faith. Many employers of labour are Christians in their family circle but are not concerned in the slightest with their social responsibilities. Many Christians today are lacking in any trained civic sense.

The growth of faith is linked in part to the development of an awareness which gradually awakens to the new horizons discovered by modern life. A given ethnic group, for example, may have a very clear awareness of family life but little regarding economics and politics. In this context, we cannot fail to recognize the importance of secular institutions for the insertion of our faith into certain aspects of life. And in a world in which three men out of every four have no knowledge of Jesus Christ, the Catholic consciousness is not coincident with the consciousness of the modern world as it has been shaped during the course of history. It is important that our Catholic consciousness should be brought to face the typical awareness of modern man, who is himself the heir of the past consciousness of man as history has formed it.

THE DIMENSIONS OF CONTEMPORARY CONSCIOUSNESS

Modern man, having discovered his power over nature, wants to transform it according to his own pleasure and to subdue it to his own reason. By the same token, he looks on himself as a species of mechanism, as a purely material entity, and he repudiates even the very idea of transcendence and of the absolute.

There results a tension in his awareness which borders on pathological anxiety. As he contemplates the extraordinary speed of progress, modern man experiences a sense of exile at the ontological level, a terror of his own mastery of the universe, a pathological anxiety whose most superficial manifestation is provided by the neuroses, a lack of the sense of God which reaches its climax in atheism as a phenomenon of our civilization, as an attitude which rejects God. In this respect, it can be said that the framework of consciousness is giving way in the presence of the vast problems which demand attention in the spheres of economics, politics, social, cultural and religious life.

We are only too ready to say, and we hear others say, that our problems are beyond human solution. It would be far better to say that, in a sense, our problems are at last capable of human solution. If we adopt the first attitude, we show that we have not adapted ourselves to the fact of that present-day universalism which, in any case, is a stage in the normal progress of a human race so built that it is destined to become one single unity. As long as our awareness is not adapted to this world-wide solidarity, man will remain in anguish. But the world-wide unity of modern consciousness has its own history which is the outward manifestation of the behaviour patterns and the discoveries of men at the deepest levels of their being.

Down to the Middle Ages, a kind of universal consciousness had developed with the religious unity of Christendom as its centre. This universal consciousness broke down when the race became aware of geographical unity and, two centuries later, of historical unity. It was the period of the great discoveries, of missions to distant lands, and it was the period of the Reformation.

Protestantism became the signal for a protest against the Church's claim to be the religious form of unity as God had willed it to be. Hence the speedy emancipation of the secular awareness of unity. But Protestantism itself was outdistanced by this protest. Mankind of its own accord is now bringing to fruition within its own soul a self-awareness which asserts itself all the more powerfully in that it separates itself from a religious unity which is the subject of controversy. Religion is no longer taken for granted. This new human consciousness takes man as a starting point and as a common denominator. Man becomes master of his own fate all the more easily in that the natural religious sense is undermined and considered as an illusion. On the other hand, new and more decisive relationships between mankind and God have the direct effect of bringing man's awareness for the first time face to face with the religious question.

These few, very inadequate, observations do however make it possible to have some idea of the kind of contemporary awareness which the Church meets today as she engages in a dialogue which is difficult but whose issues are clear. We are better able to understand the meaning of the challenge offered to the Catholicity of the Church, by contemporary consciousness which, world-wide as it is, declares its faith in the salvation of man by man. Yet the way remains open, as we shall see, for this fellowship in human destiny, so dear to man's heart, to find its way to that salvation in Jesus Christ which ever remains God's answers to man's questions in every age.

STAGES AND STATES OF AWARENESS

Awareness cannot be an abstraction. There are as many types of human awareness as there are inhabitants on the globe. But if we are to distinguish these types of awareness, and this is an essential prelude to evangelization, we must give to reality a degree of attention which we are not always inclined to bear. We have too many *a priori* or bookish notions, we trust to impressions rather than to a knowledge of reality in the true light of faith.

The distinction between types of awareness leads to the assessment of states of consciousness and to the encouragement of what we shall call stages of awareness.

There is a whole series of states of consciousness, beginning with an awareness that is consciously Christian (and which makes present the person of Jesus Christ living in it and in other people) down to the consciousness that is atheist by nature.

There is an awareness which is truly religious yet lacking means of giving expression to its religious life. This is the case with ordinary people in general. Their awareness is out of its element, even in its own operations, because religious terminology is beyond the reach of the popular mind. In very many cases the existence of Christ is obscured in men's awareness by an early education that has been sociological rather than real. Greater emphasis has been laid on the Church than on Christ, the catechism has had more influence on judgement than the one unique personality of Jesus Christ. People who have had this sort of upbringing will be left defenceless by any external upheaval in the pattern of their lives, if, for example, they are unable to go to Mass, or if circumstances change some exterior element in their existence which they have considered absolutely permanent. Religious awareness can thus become more or less debased.

But the preaching of the Gospel leads us to distinguish states of consciousness that are still more degraded and in

which religion finds no echo at all. This is a contemporary phenomenon of the greatest significance. Before an educator sets about training a religious awareness he must always ask himself whether it already exists. We often come into contact with people whose consciousness is completely *secular* and devoid of all religious content. There is nothing in them beyond a civic and secular state of mind. In our great European cities, these men's awareness is more truly defined as *debased*, as violated by the demands of life and the conditions in which this life is lived. Above all, we find ourselves in contact with a *collective consciousness* which tones down and relegates to the background whatever is concerned with the individual alone. It is a collectivism on the march and it creates a communal consciousness.

This collective consciousness is no longer shaped by the demands of what is known as the "natural" law but by communal demands, by the "law of environment". And this environment is no longer merely pagan and so containing a certain number of religious values which, though distorted, are genuine enough. No, this environment is positively and consciously atheist. It excludes from the outset all religious values; and this "law of environment" as it becomes increasingly atheist, increasingly influences even those who still practise their religion. In actual fact, they no longer think as Christians, they no longer react as Christians, even though they continue to observe a certain number of social customs that are called Christian.

It follows that a free and interior act such as faith is gradually reduced to a code of external behaviour such as religious practice. Then the inner content of an awareness which finds no expression becomes degraded in its turn. Convictions become conventions that are increasingly empty of meaning until religious observance itself disintegrates. "It's all mumbo-jumbo and means nothing", we are told. New convictions directly opposed to those previously held will then justify a non-religious attitude or even an anti-religious

volte-face. Anticlericalism will give way to absolute indifference.

True, this naturally atheist consciousness contains many elements borrowed from Christianity, but the original Christian reality has been assimilated, rationalized, secularized, transposed. It is no longer the sign of Christ, but of progress and human evolution. It is a human acquisition in the sphere of culture and civilization. There is no religious resonance or reference.

The stages of consciousness (that is, consciousness in the course of its evolution) are inherent in processes which we must identify together with their time references: certain periods of life, certain situations (marriage, military service, certain types of work). We have to estimate how far social conditions obscure or purify a man's awareness. Some men are totally conditioned by this sociological reality in cases where extreme poverty, slum life and suffering take everything away except the desire to survive. Some developments are related to the trials faith has to undergo; others move from one stage of consciousness to another.

The Young Christian Workers and their adult section (as they operate in France) offer special opportunities for Christian witness. Witness such as this is not necessarily borne by an awareness which clearly sees the Spirit suddenly at work, nor is it the result of exact observation on the part of those who come to know these facts as they arise in working-class life. It is the priest's task to help men to see that God is creating a new life among his own people and in the world. He has gradually to identify the presence of Christ, and this is the purpose of his own work in the service of a community which is growing in charity. This community—the Catholic Action group or any other which is genuine—urges each member's awareness towards its own perfection along a path which involves respect for each individual vocation. And the sign by which this awareness of the Spirit is recognized in each man's awareness and in the resultant collective consciousness, is the growth of spiritual freedom.

THE VALUES OF THE MODERN WORLD AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

In his 1956 Christmas message Pius XII noted that there is an obvious contradiction in a human race which, although confident in its progress, is yet the prey of fear and threatened by total destruction. He then called upon Christians to resolve this contradiction: "Christians are certain that they can win this victory by continuing to take their stand on the firm ground of nature and faith, and by a courageous yet prudent reassessment of the values involved, and in the first place of those which are within man himself."

To complete this short outline of some of the characteristics of the new cultural world and the content of contemporary consciousness, it is essential to identify the ultimate significance of those modern values which make it possible for the human race in its search for salvation to go further along that road.

When men face such human realities as the meaning of life, love, the family, the education of their children, suffering, happiness, etc., ideas, ideals and codes of conduct are put forward in every period of history and have more or less influence and driving power. These are what we term "values".[1] These values determine social progress and are the basis of social behaviour patterns. The acceptance by all of the same criteria, in the same hierarchical order, defines the scale of values of a civilization, a society or a group.

The Church as the guardian of divine and evangelical values is qualified to interpret and to detect the religious

[1] From the sociological standpoint, values may be defined as the criteria used by groups or by society in judging the importance of persons, aims and other elements in a culture. Moral values are personal or collective criteria based on an appraisal in the moral sphere and to which we all refer more or less spontaneously or explicitly when we make our decisions and motivate our choices and attitudes. Every value is both external to persons and at the same time within them.

content of the human values proper to a given epoch. She alone can see the religious significance of the imperatives which influence the lives of immense collectivities, imperatives such as the sense of progress, the various forms of solidarity among the workers, the advancement of the younger nations.

Further, the Church's mission demands that she should be able to bear witness, within the sight and knowledge of all men, to the answers provided by the Christian message to the deep longings these values contain, and so to reveal to men the fact that, although they may not be conscious of it, they are the bearers of great spiritual riches. For the Church this means that the clear teaching of the Word of God must be completed and corroborated by the way Christians live, involved as they are in the concrete collective realities which unite men whose desire it is to build a city of true brothers.

In the sphere of temporal organization, important tasks, a ferment of deep and sometimes contradictory aspirations, call upon men's spirit of generosity, especially among the peoples of Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe. It is from within an intelligent and courageous commitment that twentieth-century Christians bear witness to their faith in the eternal values of the Gospel. But the necessary distinctions must be made. There must be no ambiguity about this. We must be capable of grasping to the full those contemporary values which can become a way of salvation.

We are justified in indicating as points of insertion for faith the sense of freedom in modern man, his respect for others, his trust in progress, but only if we begin by looking at the world with the eye of faith. It is from this standpoint that Mgr Chappoulie writes:

> Gradually it will become possible for Christians to discover, even in men who have become thoroughly paganized and are the most hostile to the Church, points of insertion for the seeds of the Gospel. For the apostle enlightened by the Holy Spirit there is no "world" so violently opposed to the Gospel that he cannot see in it some noble natural values upon which the Christian leaven may work.

As the Christian sees them, these values in themselves are ambiguous. They run the risk of enclosing man in upon himself and of becoming a substitute for the absolute. Yet at the same time they may be a call to a higher sphere which completely transcends them. When taken as absolutes, these values are man's idol. When they are considered as foreshadowing a greater reality they point to an absolute which does away with their ambiguity.

Man's insatiable craving for happiness, his longing for a world where there is no frustration or despair, the new city of which the Marxists dream as they press forward along the path of the world's evolution, the joys of life mingled with its pain, all these are presentiments of the Salvation whose alpha and omega is Christ. For it is he who is "our paschal victim" (1 Cor. 5. 7). "Now it (the grace of salvation) has come to light, since our Saviour Jesus Christ came to enlighten us; now he has annulled death, now he has shed abroad the rays of life and immortality" (2 Tim. 1. 10).

It is Christ who beckons men today as in the past through these values.[2] This is what the Christian is called upon to reveal in terms of salvation as he provides evidence by his presence in the world that these values are linked to Christ the Saviour.

Although we have drawn a distinction between "human values" (such as health, work, education, art, whose reference is to the ends and activities men may pursue) and "religious values" (those which are directly orientated to union

[2] This is why the discoveries of our time have such an immense significance for the Christian. "The discoveries which are being made with increasing rapidity should not be for the Christian a mere item of news or no more than interesting scientific titbits. They have a genuine value as signs and they must be integrated into the Christian's apostolic vision of the Redemption. They are not just adding ornaments to the existing universe, they are building a new one. And it is this new universe and no other, that we are called to save" (Cardinal Suhard, *The Priest in the City*, p. 1).

with God and to the spiritual activities of the Church), both sets of values are constantly intermingled. The same man pursues economic, scientific, social and religious ends and activities.

It is for the Christian to learn once more how to have respect for those human values which are genuine because they develop the nature of man. They deserve to possess a real autonomy together with institutions and an organizational framework distinct from those of the Church. It is because the harmonious union of these two complementary types of value has not been understood that we continue to endure the stale odours of clericalism and naturalism (or laicism).

THE FUNDAMENTAL VALUES OF WORK AND OF INTERNATIONAL LIFE

Among the fundamental values of the contemporary world, we wish to draw attention first of all to those which emerge from a civilization based on work. While certain working conditions debase man, he is more conscious than formerly of his dignity as a worker and he has a great respect for all that strengthens the bonds between men and the rights of justice. Hence the following values which are in many ways echoes of the Gospel:

- a spirit of class loyalty which is not without its moments of intolerance,
- a spirit of solidarity in the sphere of mutual aid, demands, strikes, trade union struggles,
- a sense of responsibility, which gives the workers' claims their true character and scope,
- a respect for technical progress and for creative intelligence,
- a clarification of the idea of authority leading at times to crises over questions of authority; the combination of authority with ability and hence the value of leadership, the sense of the emergence of the working class,

the discovery of politics,
insistence on exact and precise analysis on a scientific basis,
the value of sectional organizations.

Other contemporary values centre round the development of international life and originate in the great events which are shaking certain countries, in the rapid dissemination of news by radio and television and in the world-wide repercussion of the policy of the great nations. Hence:

the discovery of politics and the development of an international sense,
the close relations existing between scientists and technologists of different countries,
the respect for the rights of the human person, and for the liberty of other people,
refusal to resort to violence, the rights of the weak, racial equality,
the rediscovery of true poverty by a reaction against the tyrannical power of money.

These values, together with others whose importance is linked with the evolution of the different human communities and social groups, are staples in the life of large bodies of men which are more or less open to Christian influence. With this fact in mind, it will be doubtless easier for us to understand the definition of the Christian mission in the broad sense given in *Economie et Humanisme* (1947), by Fr Lebret:

> ... that which causes the world to move towards the highest values, the revelation of each and every man to all the others, the revelation of the whole direction of man's evolution, the revelation of the divine.... All this must be based on a spirituality whose scope is greater than that of the materialist *mystiques* which are in conflict with one another.... We need a spirituality emerging from the vision of the world on the march, a spirituality of overall coherence.

The mission of the Church as regards values that have themselves been *revalued* is to make it possible for them to

be *rediscovered* in the light of God,[3] and the teaching of the Church as events develop is directed to this end.

This attention to the sequence of events in contemporary history conditions the interpretation it is possible for the Church to put upon all which makes up the pattern of human existence. Pope John XXIII follows Pius XII in expressing the Church's welcome to contemporary values: "The Church, her youth ever renewed by the breath of the Spirit, is always ready to recognize, to welcome and even to quicken all that honours human intelligence and the heart of man."

Cardinal Wyszynski said on his release from imprisonment: "Man is worth more than a tractor." So too Cardinal Cushing, when he denounced at Boston the persistence of racialism, declared: "Wherever any man becomes the victim of racial discrimination, Christ himself is crucified again.... We do not have to turn our eyes to other countries and other nations to find people who, by unworthy acts of discrimination, seek to reduce to nothing the full meaning of our Redemption by Christ."

With Fr Lebret, we may add: "I believe that what the modern world expects of Catholics today is that they should incarnate human values in so obvious a way, that they should have so far-reaching a sense of other people's needs, so disinterested a capacity to help others in a competent manner, that a tangible proof of the truths of the Gospel is provided by their behaviour in this respect."

The Christian mission implies that Christians face the facts. Before we explain how the Church faces the facts of

[3] It must also be borne in mind that certain Christian values are, so to speak, lost to the modern world. Examples are the sense of mystery, of what transcends man and whose content is too vast for him to exhaust; the sense of sin (modern man uses the words "mistake" and "error"); the spiritual efficacy of prayer and sacrifice, etc. It is for the Christian to bear witness within the values the modern world contains and to live by them while at the same time transcending them, but he must also witness to the values the modern world forgets. The preaching of the Gospel is impossible otherwise.

the great modern currents of thought, and before we describe the new missionary era inseparable from a Church engaged in her mission, we take the liberty of closing this survey of contemporary institutions and states of awareness by quoting the following plea by Friedrich Heer for a genuinely Catholic attitude of mind among Christians, called as they are to devote themselves to the Christian mission:

> Today the Catholic Christian needs to have an attitude of mind genuinely eager to make contact with reality and full of confidence in the future. He needs an authentic confidence in himself, he needs to be deeply rooted in the present, to seek a reconciliation with his time and with his contemporaries. Leo XIII's appeal many years ago to French Catholics to rally to the Republic is an indication of what our tasks are to be, both now and in the future. And this reconciliation with our time and our contemporaries cannot be brought about except through the exercise of patience and through a joyful acceptance of new struggles whose forms we have still to discover.
>
> Our numerous non-Christian contemporaries and the spirit of the times (and both, in so many ways, refuse to have anything to do with the Christian attitude) may well accept only one form of the proof of God's presence, namely his presence and his active presence in the fullness and power of a spiritual life perfectly incarnated in a human person.
>
> A man who wants to bear witness to the personal God must enlarge his own personality, he must bring it to maturity, he must make it a lens or a prism whose facets may reveal the splendour of the Sun.
>
> The fear many Christians have of the period in which they live, of the present and the future, casts a cloud for many non-Christian minds over the divine sun, God, that unconquered sun which is Christ, that sun whose rays pierce the spirits of all men. We have to create, not only among ourselves but together with all those among whom we live, the facets of that prism which will lie open to this divine radiance.

PART II

AN EXCEPTIONAL MISSIONARY SITUATION

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCH AND THE GREAT CONTEMPORARY MOVEMENTS

Even a rapid glance at the religious situation of the contemporary world convinces us that Catholicism—and even Christianity—is a minority religion. There are some 500,000,000 Catholics out of a total of 2,800,000,000 human beings. This represents about seventeen per cent of the total world population. And according to the strict calculations of Fr Naïdenoff, if only those Catholics who are genuine believers and who practise are counted, the figure must be reduced to 250,000,000. Other Christians number some 450,000,000. But there are also great masses of men who are not Christians, some 400,000,000 Mohammedans, 320,000,000 Hindus and almost 200,000,000 atheists or men with no religion.

A few investigations will make it easier to understand that the Church is in a minority. Leaving aside countries in which she is completely absent and forbidden, what are the 260,000 Catholics of Japan among 95,000,000 inhabitants, the 1,200,000 in Indonesia among 86,000,000? In Asia Catholics are a mere two and a quarter per cent and only just over eleven and a half per cent in Africa. And we are well aware that in certain countries taken as a whole, the working classes, the technologists and the men of letters remain outside the Church's sphere of influence.

A WORLD STANDING ON ITS OWN FEET

It is not possible to trace in a few words the pattern of the forces at work in the world of today. We have to be brief and say that our world is in process of growth, it is a world in transformation, a world standing on its own feet.

The population increase is the major problem of the twentieth century. The birth-rate operates to the Church's disadvantage since it favours the pagan masses and increases the disproportion between them and the body of the faithful. One example will suffice. In 1910 the population of China was estimated at 368,000,000. Today it is in the order of 700,000,000. In some thirty or forty years time it will be in the order of 1,000,000,000. The number of Chinese Christians, especially under present circumstances, will hardly increase at all. The estimated population of the world in 1650 was 545,000,000, in 1850, 1,200,000,000, which indicates that world population doubled during the space of a century. The average estimate for the year 1980 is 3,600,000,000! The experts are of opinion that the earth has the necessary resources for a population of this size but they think that inadequate cultivation and an unequal distribution of these resources foreshadow grave inequalities, increased poverty leading to fierce revolutions. A rapidly increasing population, or at least a population whose growth cannot be stopped, is a challenge to the work of evangelization.

This world in process of growth is also one undergoing a genuine mutation, as we have already mentioned at the beginning of this book. Following in the footsteps of Fr Lebret (*Face au monde d'aujourd'hui*, Second World Congress of the Lay Apostolate, vol. II) we draw attention to some further details: the increase in the power at the disposal of mankind consequent upon the progress of the sciences and the resultant technological evolution; the existence of the great masses who are becoming conscious of their needs, of their low standards of living and of their strength; the spread of a two-

fold materialism, that of the West and that of the Marxist world; the twofold economic and cultural process of the polarization of financial, scientific, military and economic power in the direction of the United States and the U.S.S.R. We have also pointed out already, in connection with the process of socialization, the collectivist and communitarian style of life which is tending to take root everywhere. As Fr Lebret shows, this is both a hindrance to and a starting-point for the search for God, and so to and for evangelization.

We must lay greater stress on the third characteristic, namely, the world as standing on its own feet. Whatever we may think of Fr Frisque's analysis of the mission into times of strength and times of weakness (and this is an analysis which should be undertaken again in detail and so doubtless modified in the process) we may accept his definition of a world "standing on its own feet" as "a section of the human race . . . in possession of a civilization and a culture inspired by a world-vision, and having as its framework a solid system of thought". It may well be that some section of the human race has always been more or less "on its own feet". In any case, this is true in our time. And it means that we are facing a world which is consistent with itself and coherent, yet has to a certain extent an aggressive attitude towards Christianity.

Here are three examples, Islam, Marxism, the sects that are partly Christian and partly pagan. Three other examples will be brought forward later as the three spearheads of future development, namely, the scientific and technological world, the underdeveloped countries, the working-class world. In other words, from one or several points of view, the whole modern world appears as coherent and yet as antagonistic to Christian action.

Islam is in the first place a fellowship, a community, a sharing in the same spirit, a system in which temporal and spiritual are closely interlocked. It is to all appearances a system without any flaw and it is based on a faith as

unshakeable and as hard as a rock; it is a huge world-wide sounding-box, a web in which all the threads are bound together and all reverberate at the slightest impulse; it is a sense of pride, a contempt for others, an essentially religious totalitarianism claiming to control the whole of life and to give a solution to every problem. In spite of centuries of contacts and many missionary efforts, conversions of Mohammedans to Christianity remain rare except in those peripheral areas where Islam is no more than a superficial tincture. The modern technological world is in a fair way to shaking the edifice of Islam but for thirteen centuries it has opposed to Christianity a granite-like resistance defying all attempts at penetration.

Communism is not a religion but it often shows the coherence, the total vision of the world, the fervour, the mystical spirit, perhaps even the fanaticism, of a religion. The monolithic organization of the Party, which includes all the national Communist parties, increases the cohesion, the spirit of obedience and faith which so often make its members impervious to conversion and certain of a glorious future. J. Monnerot has called Communism "the twentieth-century Islam". This is obviously a formula intended to shock, it is thought-provoking and rough and ready, but it contains some truth. The two worlds of Islam and of Communism have one thing in common, they explain everything, they are sure of themselves, at least to all appearances; they are fiercely hostile to influences from outside, they are united, integrated, coherent. There are several million Communist militants in the world and tens of millions of men whose life and thought are dominated by Marxism. Here is a formidable problem for the future of the Church and her mission. We shall return to it when we state our conclusions.

Another world, much less stable and homogeneous, is that of the sects. We are not referring here to the Protestant denominations with their innumerable divisions and a religious influence that is far from negligible, but of the new religious

movements which are bringing about a symbiosis between Christianity and non-Christian religions although at varying levels and sometimes only on the surface. There is Voodoo in Haiti, Caodaism in Vietnam, Matswanism and Kibangism in Africa. These various movements are amazingly successful and they derive their family likeness and their inner solidarity from their roots in the deepest levels of the mentality of the people, its past and its folklore, and from the fact that they correspond to national and local aspirations. In the presence of movements such as these Christianity appears as something foreign, out of keeping, rigid and demanding. Borrowings from it and the consequent confusion do not make its task any easier, they create fresh difficulties. These sects cause tensions of a new kind and, as Péguy would have said, lay on an anti-Christian coating. They inaugurate a new spiritual balance of forces which satisfies, for a time at least, religious aspirations and needs.

RELIGIOUS REVIVALS AND NATIONALISM

Two factors accentuate the resistance of the world to Christianity. One is the revival of non-Christian religions and the other a supercilious and widespread spirit of nationalism. The first phenomenon is both a defence reflex against an invasion of materialism and Christianity, and also an imitation of the latter. Since the last war there has been a revival of Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Hinduism, a partial revival of Shintoism and even of traditional Animism. These different institutions are reorganizing themselves, regrouping themselves, adapting themselves to the modern world; they are founding schools and charitable undertakings, sometimes even missionary societies. Islam and Buddhism are tending to become State religions, particularly in Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon. Buddhism celebrated with great splendour the 2,500th anniversary of the Buddha's enlightenment. Hinduism is sending missionaries all over the world. Animism is extolled

as the religious basis of the negro spirit. Everywhere religion claims that it is capable of bringing about peace and happiness, and gives proof of its inner and external vitality.

This is often combined with stirring and enthusiastic nationalist awakening. This powerful movement is fundamentally legitimate though often excessive and unjust because it has long been repressed and distorted; it is a driving force among all those peoples who till recently were fully or partially colonized. It unites the under-equipped countries. It is one of the great events of our time and its symbol is the Bandung Conference (April, 1955). Its explosive force is phenomenal and it raises to their feet the peoples whom history has treated unfairly. It compensates for poverty and humiliations; it is a factor making for cohesion and for resistance to foreign influences, including Christianity. And it is based on sound and genuine values, the community and family spirit, art and contemplation, communion with nature, respect for old age and for life, balanced living and health. These are values which Christianity when properly understood should adopt, preserve, extol and make its own. The non-Christian world is not, as has been too long believed, an empty, poor and negative thing, a hollow world. Nor is it a flabby, docile world, a world for us to grasp, a world waiting and calling for us.

It is a world standing on its own feet. A further proof of this is its aggressive attitude towards ourselves. It is only too easy and childish to put this aggressive attitude down to some sort of adolescent crisis. But there is also the aggressiveness of the adult, of the man who is sure of himself, of the man who has become aware of his own strength and of his own personality and who no longer wants to allow himself to be led by others. This aggressiveness has many aspects and many names: there is the aggressiveness of nationalism, of secularism, of the technological spirit and of such anti-Christian ideals as atheism and existentialism.

There exists a non-Christian world. For all practical purposes it is atheist and almost always materialist from the point

of view of morals and thought. It is a world which none of the efforts at evangelization at present undertaken by the Church seems capable of reaching directly to any appreciable extent. It is a world which, for innumerable reasons, rejects the Church and her message, a world which is building the future and from which the Church is not merely absent but to a great extent excluded. It is a new and coherent world, impelled forward by one single evolutionary movement and with which the established Christian communities and their clergy no longer have much contact. The working class, more or less deeply imbued with Marxism or Socialism (in many countries at least), is only one part of this world which extends far beyond it. It now includes whole populations and, in Africa, populations that have only recently achieved national independence as well as peoples with a far more developed and sometimes more ancient culture, in Asia for instance. The only thing they will accept from the West is its technology. The current theme of neutralism is becoming a dominant idea for them and they intend to free themselves both economically and culturally from all Western influence. They thus run the risk of rejecting the Church which, for the time being, seems to them linked in fact with the West.

In these countries or in these social surroundings, the existing Christian communities remain cut off from many of the circles formed by the dynamic and effective groups. An impressive objective study could be made of the situation of Christian communities in almost all the Asiatic countries and in many of those in Africa or Latin America, as well as in the working class and the technological worlds. These Churches certainly face up to the problem of the spread of apostolic work and there have been attempts on their part to bring this about. But they too often remain entirely without influence on economic and technological evolution in its inexorable course; and they are often hindered in their activities by suspicion on the part of the civil authorities. Hence they run the risk of falling back on themselves in an attitude

of self-defence which, though doubtless essential at times, leaves them without any genuine action upon the most active and representative groups on whom will depend in fact the economic, human and political future of the country.

Thus the West, paradoxically enough, is working in two mutually contradictory ways against Christianity. Its self-styled monopoly of the latter and its historical predominance in the Church make Christianity, despite its Eastern origin, appear largely as a Western phenomenon and so strange and suspect to all that is not Western. Still more does it seem to be bound up with the West's excesses and crimes, sharing with it the grave responsibility for colonialism and economic exploitation, a responsibility rendered all the heavier because of the bitterness and the disappointments of a youthful nationalism which finds itself up against realities, like a bird beating itself against the bars of its cage. In other respects the West gives rise to ideals which gradually flood the world and are formidable obstacles to the spread of the Gospel. Leaving Marxism to one side, we may mention other forms of atheism, secularism, materialist technological theories, existentialism, etc. Thus the West conducts a war on two fronts against Christianity. On the one hand it seems to have annexed Christianity for its own benefit, to have used it and distorted it to its own advantage. On the other hand it mysteriously produces Christianity's most obvious enemies. It is the origin and source of nationalism in the world, that equivocal force which turns against the West and sometimes against Christianity.

The aggressiveness of the non-Christian world is revealed in many ways; there are limits to the numbers of missionaries permitted to enter certain countries such as India and Egypt; there are campaigns against the missionaries as in India, threats to the Christian schools or confiscation of private schools as in the Sudan, Ceylon, Guinea, etc., not to mention the more or less open persecution in Communist countries or those influenced by Communism. In all kinds of places,

evangelization is looked at with suspicion, it seems to be the sign of complacency, intolerance, a violation of men's consciences, a cultural aggression which young and independent peoples cannot accept. Too many Christians are considered as traitors to their country or to the cause of the workers or to that of human progress. Christianity seems contrary to the national interest, to public peace, to the progress of the masses.

OUR HANDICAPS

We still have to complete this picture which we want to make clear and realistic but not systematically pessimistic, by calling attention to some of our handicaps. Certain of these we have already mentioned, the population increase, the apparent Western origin of Christianity, its seeming opposition to national aims. There are others which in all fairness must be pointed out.

The first of these seems to be the inadequacy of the missionary organization and mobilization of the Church. She is hemmed in by traditional limits and past categories and so cannot approach the mission worlds with sufficient flexibility, freedom, strength or resources. This is as true in the case of the working-class world and other dechristianized sectors, of the world of technology and other groups which have never been Christianized because they are of recent date, as in that of the world beyond the seas. Take some examples that speak for themselves. Out of a total of 450,000 priests, only 30,000 (including the native clergy) are stationed in Asia and Africa. In the same way, only 60,000 nuns out of a total of about 1,000,000 are in these continents. This means that, among two-thirds of the human race, one priest out of every fifteen in the world is at work and one nun out of every sixteen. We can take a still more striking example. France alone has almost twice as many priests and nuns as the whole of Asia and Africa. If the proportion were the same in France as in Asia

and Africa, there would be one priest to every ward (*arrondissement*) in Paris. There therefore exist countries which are spiritually overequipped and countries which are underequipped. This is a sad fact and the disproportion between the two is very considerable. The same observation is valid for the other missionary sectors, the working-class world, the technical world, etc. And we have only to see how in France dioceses poor in religious organizations grow increasingly poorer year by year while dioceses still rich in this respect look on, often enough, with indifference. Concern for world-wide evangelization should lead to regrouping, reduction of numbers where these are excessive, considerable movement of personnel throughout the Church and the world.

Another handicap is the general lack of preparation of missionaries in every sector for the difficult task that faces them today. Although the Church has spoken clearly on this subject, little attention has been paid to what she has said. Because of lack of personnel or of foresight as well as through a failure to give sufficient thought to the matter, many of the superiors responsible have not devoted enough time to provide their subjects with adequate formation. Although this is not general and in all fairness we ought to mention the exceptions, yet the fact remains that specialist missionaries have not received the doctrinal and technical formation required in view of the modern conditions under which the apostolate is exercised. One of the reasons for the failure of the priest-workers was their inadequate doctrinal equipment. Enthusiasm or heroic charity do not supply for every deficiency. The priests our dioceses are providing (in accordance with *Fidei donum*) for the Churches of Africa are not generally given any special formation. Too many foreign missionaries, not to mention the local clergy, have too small an intellectual and doctrinal equipment, and it is not sufficiently suited to the conditions of the country. In every missionary area throughout the world there are apostles who have not been able to adapt themselves, who are a deadweight, a hindrance, whose

presence does more harm than good. Yet through negligence, lack of authority or of courage, they are left where they are and no account is taken of their sometimes baneful influence. The times are too serious for such lacunae, inertia and obstacles to be tolerated.

There is more than enough to be said on the need for reforms and a new spirit. The missionary Encyclicals have shown the way, especially *Princeps pastorum* (1959), but it is far from true that they have been applied everywhere seriously, intelligently and boldly. We shall only mention a few points they raise: their insistence on the formation of élites and *cadres*, re-adaptation of the education of the clergy, of Catholic Action and of religious instruction, a more thorough social and civic activity, the establishment of centres for research, for study and for thorough formation, an increase in the number of contemplative convents, and greater emphasis on the international spirit and on international collaboration. To take a few examples, can we tolerate the fact that in that part of Africa under French influence there is at present no Catholic institute of higher studies (not necessarily a University) and almost no schools for the formation of *cadres*? Can we tolerate the failure to organize or to regulate the teaching of local languages in many missionary areas?

There is another deep-seated cause behind this situation. Just as we normally have the rulers we deserve, and Christians generally speaking have the clergy they deserve, so too Christians have the missions they deserve. If Christendom had a greater international and missionary spirit, if the popes had not spoken almost in vain for more than forty years, if priests and Christians, not to mention bishops, had taken the spread of the faith in all mission fields more seriously, we should not be in such an unfavourable situation in the modern world. Missionaries would be more numerous, better formed, better equipped and supported. They would not have the unpleasant feeling that they are isolated, misunderstood and sometimes almost cut off from the Church and from the main

body of Christians. Christendom is often dull, clumsy, tied to the past and blind to the realities of the world of today. It is only slowly awaking to its world-wide responsibilities. And the awakening has come through the shock administered by the facts of underdevelopment and material poverty in the world. There may well be an element of fear for Christendom's own safety. But this awakening ought to have been the result of Christendom's deep faith and love for Christ and the Church. When Christians really have the missionary spirit in all its breadth and vision, then the mission will be better situated in the world of today.

There is one final handicap in the work of evangelization and it is the lack of unity among Christians. This has been said over and over again, but the fact is too serious to be passed over in complete silence. Historically speaking, the harm done to the evangelization of the world by the divisions among Christians is unquestionable and considerable. These divisions are a source of amazement and of scandal and they prevent conversions. They are a permanent contradiction to Christian witness in the concrete. By praying and working for closer contact and union among Christians, we are labouring for the conversion of the world, we are doing a missionary task. Catholic circles are at last beginning to feel concern in this matter but prejudices are still present and there are many whose minds are still not convinced of the importance of this subject. As long as these divisions exist, there will still be a formidable obstacle to the progress of the world-wide mission.

Such in brief is the missionary situation today. It is certainly true that more than ever before ardent souls are consecrating their lives to missionary work intelligently and in the spirit of charity. More than ever before perhaps Christendom is making massive efforts in this field. Yet much remains to be done, and as Pius XI said, quoting a Latin tag, nothing is done while anything remains to be done.

COUNTRIES IN COURSE OF DEVELOPMENT

The second important sector of the mission is that of the underdeveloped countries which it would be more tactful and just to call the countries in course of development. The term is not co-extensive with that of "mission country" since there are countries extremely well equipped (Scandinavia, for example) which from a juridical point of view are mission countries, while some underdeveloped countries are not, from the juridical standpoint, mission countries (Latin America taken as a whole is an instance of this). It is nonetheless true that the lack of material and cultural equipment often goes hand in hand with spiritual or more precisely Christian underdevelopment.

It is no part of our task to go into the question of underdevelopment. We merely restate, after Yves Lacoste, the phenomena characteristic of it. They are: an inadequate food supply, a deficient agriculture, a low average national income, a low standard of living, insufficient industry, insufficient use of mechanical energy, a subordinate economic position, an excessively large commercial sector, out-of-date social institutions, the slow growth of the middle classes, a low level of national unity, a high birth-rate, a defective though improving health service, and a growing awareness of all this. The people who live in the underdeveloped countries are in a wretched state and they know it. They also know that their situation is that of the majority of men and they have become aware of their own strength. They know in a more or less vague way that the future is on their side and that they are to some extent the masters of the world's future, if only through the pattern of the voting in the United Nations where these countries see their number increasing. It may one day give them an absolute majority.

These men are not very familiar with Christianity and have no great sympathy with it. They have anti-Western prejudices carefully and abundantly fed by Communist propaganda.

They often confuse Christianity with the West and mistakenly accuse the former of the sins of the latter. They have a strong desire to live and to live in freedom and happiness. They feel within them a confused longing for unity and brotherhood among men. They are sometimes tempted to give way to hatred or resentment but they are too well aware of their need for peace to accept war in any lighthearted way. They want to be neutral and declare that they are. They are disturbed by the clashes between the two Great Powers. They ask for economic aid from the West but are mistrustful of its interference in the political, cultural and even the spiritual spheres. They have a somewhat naïve admiration for Russia and China which started from a situation similar to their own and have become great nations. But they do not know the cost and the limits of this spectacular success which is often exaggerated by propaganda. They are not sufficiently aware that technology presupposes a genuine asceticism and "is based on virtues much more than on material forces. . . . The work of an air line, an electric power station, a public works undertaking depend on outstanding qualities of self-abnegation, devotion, honesty and conscientiousness" (Pierre Rondot).

In a word, these men are often genuinely intoxicated by the idea of progress and possessed by the demon of technology; they are above all eager to succeed in the economic and political fields. In principle, therefore, they appear somewhat impervious to spiritual action. Yet man does not live by bread alone and hence he bears within him a vision of the world and a past that are largely spiritual. Christianity must speak his language, make his aspirations its own while correcting and purifying them, it must show the real effectiveness in the sphere of human progress and the extent to which it defends man against himself and against his false gods. The missionary must try to meet modern man on his own ground, he must show him how by keeping our eyes on heaven we save and give a sense to our life here on earth, he must reveal

the way in which Christ takes all things to himself and leads us towards a better life. These simple considerations determine the direction missionary activity must take and lead to a great many practical applications. We must take care that we do not disappoint a world which longs for liberty, unity and a better life. It is for us to make our own concern the future of men in underdeveloped countries while refusing to deny all that is acceptable and healthy in their past and in our own.

If we compare the mentality of Christians with the clear and often repeated words of the hierarchy of the Church, we shall see once again how far it lags behind the Church's teaching in the practical sphere.

THE WORLD OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

There are several spheres in which the missionary work of the Church is of special urgency and importance in the world today. We shall mention three of them: the world of science and technology, the countries now in the course of development and the working-class world. There is no doubt that these three spheres require the missionary Church to make an increased effort of thought and action.

There is no need to demonstrate that our civilization is of the scientific and technological type. We are in the midst of the technological revolution, and this in every country throughout the world. This revolution has innumerable and profound psychological and religious repercussions. A few facts pregnant with consequences will illustrate the reality and the importance of this revolution: they are, the thousands of men and the billions of money devoted to scientific research, the astounding progress in the field of discovery and knowledge, the increasing concentration of the population in urban centres, the ever greater need for technologists and technicians, automation, socialization, depersonalization.

The Church has not failed to give her attention to this

problem. Pius XII devoted an appreciable portion of his teaching to the Christian attitude towards science and technology. We have only to re-read, for instance, his 1953 Christmas message. He constantly reminded us of the moral and religious values but was careful not to condemn technological progress. He even took care not to adopt a pessimistic attitude towards it. It is for man as a son of God to complete the Creator's work in the constant light of Christ's message.

Many studies have been made of the relations between Christianity and the technological world showing how relevant, grave and urgent this problem is. Great men have turned their attention to it. Among those who are no longer with us it is sufficient to mention Fr Teilhard de Chardin, whose work is now exciting universal interest.

Yet it is easier to provide this question with a theoretical rather than a practical answer, and in actual fact there is a great gulf between Christianity and the technological world. True, M. Fourastié assures us that no religion worthy of the name needs to be afraid of a scientific and technological civilization. He even goes so far as to claim that "the Christian religion itself, and it alone, has produced in the human race the social climate necessary for the advent of this civilization" (*Semaine des Intellectuels*, 1955, pp. 187 following). But even a rapid survey of the facts leads to less optimistic findings.

It is first of all essential to be aware of the heterogeneous nature of this technological world. The worker, the technician, the engineer, the manager, the economist, the financier, the scientist, each have a specific function in the technological undertaking, and their amenability to religious influences and attitudes varies considerably. At each level, the problem requires to be re-examined and reassessed.

There is a further point; the various nations are at different stages in their evolution. Japanese students still hold, in the main, the positivist and pseudo-scientific dogmas of the last

century and their masters are still Comte, Feuerbach, Renan, etc. In countries of pagan, Mohammedan or Communist mentality, there is no Christian ideology to provide the desire for progress with a content, an orientation or a foundation. Any synthesis is inevitably based on other philosophies and world views.

Finally, it is obvious that although science and technology are compatible with a developed and intelligent Christian faith, they are able in themselves to ruin a faith which is without secure foundation and they may turn men away from God. We have only to consider the population of the technical schools and the world of the lower grade technicians to see that here again a little knowledge estranges men from God while a great deal of knowledge brings them closer to him. But in the world of the scientists how few are Christians, especially Christians whose Christian training and experience are on a par with their secular culture!

It follows therefore that the world of science and technology remains a missionary area, not only because there are always new fields to be christianized and marked with the sign of faith, but because the world in question has, for the most part and in many countries, come into existence outside the sphere of Christian influence, if not in opposition to it. There is an immense amount of work to be done at all levels, at the level of reflection and theology as well as at the level of action and Christian teaching. The Church today in every place, in every set of circumstances and at every social level, must take into account this element of the modern world, since it is one of the most fundamental and powerful. If the Church wants to fulfil the aspirations of modern man, she must understand in a thoroughly practical way that one of his essential demands is that he should be offered a sure path in this field, one which is both human and divine and equally removed from a refusal to face the facts and from a blind and blissful optimism. She will have to take up a positive

attitude towards this problem as indeed towards every problem. As Fr Russo says:

> Technology too is an ideal. And I feel I am entitled to regret that, in our preoccupation with spiritual values, we do not attach enough importance to the technological ideal, even when facts seem to be against it. I believe that there is a technological ideal and that this ideal is perfectly compatible with a Christian view of the world. I would go further still and say that this ideal should have its place in our Christian conception of the world.

THE WORLD OF THE WORKERS IS A MISSIONARY FIELD [1]

The Christian community faces a working-class world which is estranged from and hostile to the established capitalist and middle-class order. It accuses the Church and her sons of

[1] This notion of a "human field" is borrowed from science and indicates a complex of social relationships which shape the mentality and the behaviour patterns of men or of a group of men according to the way in which these influences combine with one another.

Modern man "belongs" in many different ways. There is the district in which he lives, the profession he follows, the groups of which he is a member (his political party, religion, friends, cultural influences, leisure occupations, etc.); these networks of relationships are not all equally Christian or inspired by the Gospel.

In the sphere of mass evangelization we may roughly distinguish between the traditional type of mission in a geographical area (for example, the mission to the American Indians) and a type at work in a sociological "field" (for instance, the men employed on large-scale constructions, the army, the bargees).

"The missionary field" of the working-class world is a characteristic example of a certain collective resistance due to the sociological peculiarities of the environment by comparison with that of the middle classes which are considered to have more influence in the Church. This middle-class environment, on the other hand, even though some of its sectors are atheistic, remains within the scope of the preaching of the Good News because of a kind of Christian osmosis.

These distinctions, of which the Christian people is still largely unaware, require to be gone into more thoroughly and they will become increasingly obvious as essentials for an accurate grasp of the real data of evangelization.

appearing to be quite content with this state of affairs, of being a party to it and its abuses and injustices.

Yet popes and bishops consider as an intolerable challenge to the Church's responsibilities a state of things which allows a whole world of men, women and children (on whom falls the heavier portion of the burden and heat of the day) to live outside the household of faith. At the same time, the Church's leaders know what force, what youthful vigour, what immense enthusiasm and generosity this new world contains (Mgr Chappoulie at the *Semaine des Intellectuels Catholiques*, 1955).

The working-class world as such, more than ever before, is one of the fundamental data in the problem of evangelization. It is both complex and exacting and requires that the Church should put herself on a missionary footing. The working class is now an international, organic, unified reality. Beyond the important sociological differences included within it, it is the basis of a collective advancement which is irresistible.

The working-class movement is the product of the oppression of the workers. Today, through the collective experiments that are being made and because of its increasingly international character, the movement not only puts forward its claims but also brings to the world as a whole new answers, new ways of thought, a new kind of society. More than one dominant characteristic of our new cultural world, for example, democratization, nationalization and legislation in the field of work, was given its acid test in the working-class movement.

The working-class movement is not only concerned with the transformation of the working class, it is gradually becoming the conscience of the new world. In addition, it must be remembered that the working-class movement is a historical phenomenon which is becoming universal. Yet it is bound up with an actual situation that raises grave problems for the Christian conscience. As Mgr Chappoulie has written: "We cannot honestly condemn working-class unity for the sole reason that the Communist party is attempting in the field

of technology to evolve a united working-class action which would be a formidable instrument in their hands for the seizure of power." As long ago as 1950, Fr Daniélou pointed out the agonizing dilemma of the militant worker who wishes to be an authentic Christian:

> This working-class world is a turning point in creation, it is laden with authentic values, it overthrows outworn institutions and makes God's action manifest. But at the same time it is a pagan world which has replaced the ancient idols of the nations by the new idol which is man himself, worshipping himself as the recent discoverer of his own demiurgic power. Hence the Christian worker is and must be involved in two loyalties neither of which he can deny. On the one hand, he must be faithful to his class even if this class is at the moment linked to an active anti-Christian movement. Whether we like it or not, whether we approve of it or not, *the working-class movement has its own unity* and every worker is therefore dependent on the U.S.S.R., in so far as the latter is in the vanguard of the working-class struggle. He cannot be a party to the idolatry it practises. He must show himself wholly intransigent on this score or his attitude would be completely meaningless. The two elements together make the Christian worker's situation incomprehensible, contradictory, impossible. Yet this is the situation in which he must live his life....
>
> And this is why he stands out in our time as the supreme witness. He is rejected by all men, by Christianity which does not agree that he should be loyal to a movement which aims to destroy it and which rejects it instinctively in its own self-defence. He is rejected by the Marxists who cannot allow him to refuse to worship their idols ("Mission chrétienne et mouvement ouvrier", in *Bulletin du Cercle Saint-Jean-Baptiste*, Feb. 1950).

Thus we are obliged to recognize, as in the case of the Christian worker, a crucial contradiction in the sphere of collective realities. Working-class unity opposes Christian universality, and Communism, in the vanguard of the movement towards the international unification of the world of

work, achieves this unity for its own ends. But this will never justify the Church in leaving to their own fate the mass of those who are especially called to enter the Kingdom of God.[2]

[2] According to some people, the European worker has changed his awareness and his behaviour in so profound a way that a whole period of social history has come to an end. There is no longer, so we are told, any working-class movement in the classical sense. This is an important issue when we come to consider the evangelization of the working-class world.

It is an undoubted fact that the worker today is no longer what he once was. His professional status is undergoing modifications introduced by the technological evolution of his work, by new working conditions, new housing, a standard of living and cultural facilities which are very different from those of the past. But, apart from the fact that statistics prove that insecurity and dependence now have a different aspect for the worker, he nevertheless preserves a code of behaviour typical of his class.

Some writers tend to hold that the workers living in the most unfavourable conditions are no longer the proletarians since the latter are now proletarians of a new kind and are in the process of achieving their economic and political integration. A whole mass of workers, exhausted and worn out by living conditions of various kinds, declare they are incapable of reflection, that they cannot read anything other than strip cartoons, and are physically unable to enjoy any entertainment other than a variety show or a comic film. For some of them, dancing is too tiring and meetings a luxury. And as for religious services....

Note. The English and American reader, perhaps, may find the above views of the working class strange and pessimistic. Two points must however be borne in mind. (1) In the world as a whole Communism has a predominant influence over the working-class movement; (2) there is no guarantee that the spiritual vacuum in our own two nations will not eventually be replaced by some form of Marxism. —*Trans.*

CHAPTER IV

DECHRISTIANIZATION, DESACRALIZATION AND ATHEISM

The survey we have just made has covered one after the other geographical and cultural groups, the major religions, the most influential currents of thought, the key sectors such as the world of science and technology, the nations in course of development and the working-class world. It has convinced us both of the world-wide character of contemporary paganism and also of the urgent need for a missionary Church conscious of the practical results, in all quarters, of the cleavage between itself and the new civilization.

But before we draw the main outlines of a new missionary era, as it is gradually taking shape in the Church of today, we must offer a clear diagnosis of this exceptional missionary situation. We have to distinguish between dechristianization, desacralization and atheism.

We shall find that any analysis which aims to give a complete account of the phenomenon of religion as it impinges on the minds of our contemporaries is of considerable complexity. In France and elsewhere, dechristianization must not be confused with a *lack* of christianization in certain geographical and cultural groups; and desacralization is not an accurate measuring rod for atheism any more than a healthy

sense of the lay status is to be identified with a secularist mentality.[1]

DECHRISTIANIZATION AND NON-CHRISTIANIZATION

> The French bishops have attempted to examine once again and more intensively the present dechristianization of France. But although religious practice remains approximately the same as fifty years ago and the influence of the Catholic Church is felt increasingly in different sectors of the population, yet we are obliged to recognize that a materialistic mentality is progressively spreading in individual, family and social life. Further, the Church unfortunately has no place at all or is only partially present in many social groups. This is particularly the case in the working-class world and in relation to many forms of modern thought, especially in the field of technological civilization, so full as it is in other respects of hope for the world.

This is the opening passage of the Declaration of the plenary Session of the French episcopate held in April 1960. But how many bishops throughout the world could say the same as regards their own countries! The ancient Catholic nations are experiencing a religious crisis aggravated by the difficulties experienced in an attempt to adapt themselves to the contemporary world. The outcome of this situation is a decline in religious practice and a weakening of faith.

Already in 1954 Mgr Garonne had defined this phenomenon of dechristianization as follows:

> What we call dechristianization is more exactly described as the appearance in the world, in every individual man and in sociological institutions, of *an entirely new state of mind.* This state of mind becomes recognizable in our institutions by a complete and accepted lack not only of Christian but of any

[1] "If the modern world is secular, in that it separates temporal and spiritual, profane and sacred, that secularity is undeniably of Christian origin" (Etienne Borne, *Modern Atheism* [American edn, *Atheism*], p. 106, in this series).

religious influence. This is something entirely new. This state of mind becomes recognizable in *men's consciences* through the existence of a whole sector of existence beyond the range of the light of faith. We are thus faced not so much with dechristianization as with the appearance of something foreign to us and not in itself hostile to Christianity.

This distinction between "dechristianization" and "non-christianization" is not a mere verbal quibble. It expresses a complex situation of which religious sociology is becoming increasingly aware as it is forced to recognize that in fact certain sectors of mankind are not dechristianized since they have never been christianized at all as communities. One example is the working-class world.

Our own experience as a parish priest in a dechristianized environment has led us to the following conclusions: there is a loss of the appreciation of the value of the sacraments and of religious practices among a considerable number of baptized persons who are still anxious to keep in contact with the Church, and a total misunderstanding of what the Church is among others who no longer are affected by the dechristianization process since they have, to all intents and purposes, become atheists.

The majority of these non-practising baptized persons are not included in any category envisaged by the Church's Canon Law since they are neither pagans in the primitive meaning of the term nor formal apostates. This great mass of men and women, our neighbours and friends, our companions at work or during our leisure hours, form an army of baptized persons who are more or less unbelievers and whose occasional religious practice is the result of a religious throwback and of superstition in the literal sense of the word.

But a further distinction must be made in this dechristianized mass. It is composed of social strata which have each their own kind of dechristianization.

For the more wealthy, money has dethroned God. In this connection there is no worse form of hypocrisy than the

attitude, for example, of certain *nouveaux riches* who are shameless enough to maintain the religious practices they were brought up to observe, such as assistance at Mass and Easter duties while, in their daily lives, money like a tidal wave has played havoc with their Christianity. They excuse themselves by saying that God does not expect so much of them. Their almsgiving is a cover for their materialism, a cheap way of obtaining pardon. Their relations with a few priests who are family friends provide their final justification for a quiet conscience. The Church for them is the guardian of the established order. There are men who, although they appear to be the defenders of spiritual values considered as a moral force, are in fact authentic materialists.

Among the proletarians, a feeling of resentment seems to be the source of their prejudice against God and the Church. "We haven't any luck and we haven't any God... if there was a God, we shouldn't be in the state we are in." Their cry of revolt and their blasphemies are the outward expression of their sufferings. A home oppressed by poverty kills hope. "There is no way out for us," they say. God is no longer a deliverer in their eyes. Deceived by some and forgotten by others, they include God in their writ of excommunication.[2]

[2] J. Folliet compares the religious situation of the working class with that of the middle classes and is of opinion that the mass of the proletariat have never, except in a few individual cases, had any knowledge of Christianity or lived the Christian life. On the other hand, the predominance of the middle classes from the sociological point of view is by way of being an obstacle to the conversion of the workers and all the more so in so far as the middle-class, bourgeois notions of worship, spiritual life, morality, the parish and civic and social ideals are the result of sociological influences rather than of the Gospel. Folliet concludes that our duty is to christianize the working classes yet without alienating the middle classes (*La Croix*, June 15th, 1952).

[While this footnote is especially applicable to conditions in France, those of the working class in English-speaking countries are becoming increasingly similar to those found in France, at least as far as religion is concerned. And the middle-class mentality in religion is a ubiquitous phenomenon.—*Trans.*]

On the one hand, we have the rich man who, though he may deceive men, cannot deceive God, and on the other, the poor who no longer feel at home in the Church of Jesus Christ; and in between is *the mass of dechristianized men.* These are the simple folk who muddle along and make do with a debased form of Christianity. Their way of life may be summed up in two commandments: the first and the more usual is, "I have a religion of my own", and the second which is equal to the first is, "It is nobody else's business". With this summary and distorted decalogue it is possible to hem oneself round as much as one likes with an individualism which has to answer to nobody, not even to God. The God they speak of, whether to honour or to reject him, is a false God, a vague, indefinable God, easy-going or unapproachable according to the different individuals concerned. As an old Polish refugee woman said: "God's been about too long. He's far too old." And another woman told me: "St Teresa's my God." Another, I must admit, informed me at the same time that St Teresa was her *idol.*

There is only one answer to this sort of thing and it is that of an active Christian woman: "Your 'God'! Well, I don't believe in him." It is only when we have bent all our energy to unmasking this kind of idolatry, this subtle form of individualism, this false idea of the Church, all of which are found among the congregations in our churches, that we shall really be able to tackle the problem of our brethren the unbelievers.

This process of dechristianization which borders on atheism is especially noticeable among young people of the working class. Sometimes it works in a way similar to conversion, but a conversion to atheism brought about by the "grace" present in the environment. I know some young people who have thrown off the last vestiges of a religious practice that had long since been empty of all meaning, and have then acquired a spirit of greater self-sacrifice under the exhilarating influence of a new environment. Others, on the other hand, while

maintaining an exterior contact with the Church (Sunday Mass, for example, which they attend so that they can look at the girls) have long since given up the faith of their childhood.

The young people between the ages of sixteen and eighteen stand at the cross-roads. Some break with the Church but in appearance rather than in reality. Among this number are very many non-practising Christians who still have an awareness of God, a taste for prayer and generosity, all of which have Jesus Christ for their inspiration. Others break with the Church in a way that is more real than apparent and they are found among those who never miss their Sunday Mass, who send their children to catechism lessons, among engaged couples who ask for a church marriage in order to compromise with their consciences (to take out a kind of "eternal-life insurance policy"), and who are willing to make this concession to what they formerly considered a merely external piece of display to give some colour to the ceremony.[3]

In the case of both young people and adults, it is one and the same prevailing atmosphere which accelerates the deterioration of faith among these dechristianized sectors, and among unbelievers strengthens the basic conviction that God and the Church are useless: "God", said one young man, "is nothing, all that is empty talk!"

It seems that for the majority of men the line of demarcation is not in the field of religious behaviour (this is too exterior a phenomenon to provide any decisive criterion) but is determined by the kind of attitude a man has towards the salvation of the world. The distinction is then between those who see the salvation of the world as depending on liberating it from God, those who do not bother themselves

[3] Yet we may well ask who is really cheating. What was the real value of their introduction to the faith in their childhood? What opportunity was given to Catholic Action? What idea of the parish? What sort of adult witness were these young people offered? As St Thomas says: "Only those who have not yet left Jesus Christ can break with him."

about the salvation of the world and those who suffer because they see no salvation for the world.

Among those who see the salvation of the world as depending on liberating it from God, there are courageous men who think that life cannot be allowed to go on without justice or progress. They rely solely on their human intelligence and devotion in their efforts to better the lot of their brethren. Among those who do not feel that the world needs salvation are those who have succeeded in life and have a good situation. They live in comfort and have achieved their own personal advancement. Finally, those who suffer because they see no salvation for the world are often men who have not succeeded in life. Some of them cast envious eyes on those who have, and feel bitter and disappointed. "What have I done," they say, "that God should be against me?" Others merely vegetate and the failure of their efforts has disappointed them. They resign themselves to putting up with the sort of life others oblige them to lead and mutter: "If only there were a God!" The fact that each of these three kinds of attitude towards the salvation of the world is found among believers and unbelievers, practising Catholics and anticlericals, shows how complex is the dialogue between the Church and the world.

A more exhaustive analysis of these types of mentality would lead us to underline another relevant element which upsets any conclusions drawn from statistics alone, namely the existence of pseudo-Christians and pseudo-atheists. A more exact knowledge of the religious problem would involve identifying the traces of a genuine atheism among practising Christians who are not interested in Christianity apart from Sunday attendance at church. We should have to take account of the fact that some who declare they are atheists lead a life that is genuinely in keeping with the Gospel. The grave issue here is not so much that the unbeliever calls himself an atheist although his life shows persistent religious traits, as that the practising Catholic calls

himself a Christian and then says: "I have nothing to reproach myself with; I thank thee, God, that I am not as other men." Such people should be told that they do not know of what spirit they are. Unfortunately the mass of tepid Christians forms a barrier and prevents others from entering the Church.

But although we are obliged to recognize that there are "believers" who in fact do not believe, it remains true that the phenomenon of dechristianization is essentially collective and that whole masses of men more or less turn away from the Church. Still more important is the fact that only the Christian faith can even become aware, at a certain ontological level, of this massive dechristianization which challenges the preaching of salvation through Jesus. The bishops' committee of the Mission de France emphasizes this:

> This view of the phenomenon of dechristianization is a freely given supernatural light.... The grace which we have sought once more at its source deals essentially with a fact in the religious order, with the absence of Christ and his Church among certain men and in a certain environment.
>
> It is useless to think that any effort towards rechristianization will ever stand any chance of success unless it goes to the roots of dechristianization which lie deeper than the working class considered apart from the rest, and exert their influence over the whole surface of the globe. The proletarian world is only one outward sign (the most developed sign perhaps) of the transformation which is being brought about at the deepest level by technology and of which men are as much the victims as they are the architects.
>
> This sense of dechristianization must remain on the alert and sensitive to evil in all its forms and manifestations.

THE DESACRALIZATION OF OUR INSTITUTIONS

The dechristianization we witness in our times is a theme frequently repeated. The political upheavals in some areas of the world have led observers to forecast the more or less imminent and more or less complete collapse of whole sectors of the Christian world.

The spectacular disasters which followed the Russian revolution of 1917, the advent of the People's Democracies and the establishment of the Communist regime in China and in North Vietnam cannot fail to give us pause. But are we equally shaken by the fact that, since the Renaissance and the Reformation, the tide of secularization, of laicization, has been slowly, imperceptibly yet inexorably creeping over the world in which we live, over the nations whose civilization is Christian? This tide, in its negative aspect, is perhaps not so much a dechristianizing as a desacralizing force. If this is in fact the case, we should be glad this purification is taking place since it is doubtless a necessary stage in the genuine sanctification of the world and of the human race.[4] However, whatever value we may put upon this process, the fact is there. It cannot be denied that in the most varied sectors there is a movement away from the religious sphere into the secular.

One example is in the realm of art. While almost all writers, musicians, sculptors and painters used in the past to seek their inspiration in religious themes, nowadays they all look for it in the secular world.

Similarly, if we examine what we may call "the primary services" required because certain concrete circumstances either of a temporary or permanent nature call on mankind to furnish the appropriate solutions, we also notice that what until quite recently depended on initiatives provided by the Church, has now come within the competence of secular bodies. Examples are the problems of hunger, refugees, deprived children, the rehabilitation of prisoners, which are all dealt with by institutions such as Unesco, the United Nations, the International Labour Office, etc. Catholic bodies such as *Le Secours Catholique*, the International Children's Office or the Unicef now collaborate with these institutions.

[4] As Fr Congar well says, our task is not to sacralize the temporal order, not even to christianize it in itself, but to lead it to Christ (*christo-finaliser*). See *Lay People in the Church*, p. 372.

It may well be that this collaboration is still valuable and important since others' suffering easily awakens an echo in the truly Christian soul. But side by side with this entry on the credit side of our religious awareness, must we not write in the debit column a marked reluctance on the part of many Christians to share in undenominational undertakings? This is due to a residue of clericalism, a superiority complex, distrust of public institutions, and so our charity is somewhat partisan in character and is exercised much more effectively in the framework of bodies that have been officially approved by the Church authorities. In parenthesis, we must admit that lay Christians are not solely responsible for this. Too often, priests and bishops fail to draw the attention of their flocks to the genuinely human and so virtually Christian character of institutions which have come into existence over the past few years. How many sermons, Catholic weekly newspapers or pastoral letters have mentioned the publication of such documents as the new declaration of the rights of man or the rights of the child or the conclusions reached by certain inquiries made, for instance, by Unesco? And since we have mentioned Unesco, is it not regrettable that those who conduct its inquiries often meet with so little understanding and willingness to cooperate among the missionaries in the countries to which the requirements of their investigations lead them?

If we further examine the various elements of social and political life, we see that there has been a move from religious and Church control to that of the secular authorities in these spheres also. Family movements were originally religious undertakings. Today they are often regrouped with no reference at all to religion.

One sector in modern civilization which is becoming of increasing importance is that of leisure activities. Here, too, we notice a gradual movement from the religious to the secular organizations. No doubt the great religious feasts and the Lord's Day still provide the rhythms of the periods of

activity and rest, but here and there we already see signs of a break with this tradition. The Easter holidays are now independent of the festival itself and there is a general tendency to dissociate holidays from religious celebrations. In Germany especially, Sunday is gradually ceasing to be the day on which work has to stop.

Over a long period, youth movements were a kind of Church preserve, or at least the public authorities were long uninterested in them. Now, on the contrary, we see Ministries for Youth established in many countries. The importance today of organizations of young people, which they themselves have founded, can be judged by their results. The U.N.E.F. (The French National Union of Students) has come into prominence because of its attitudes towards certain problems (attitudes which are sometimes questioned), while in Turkey, Korea and Japan, young people have started revolutionary movements which have overthrown the established system in their respective countries.

In the political sphere we are forced to recognize that we are far from the days when baptismal registers were the equivalent of registers of births and marriages in Church were the only ones recognized by the State. We are far, too, from the times when the king was only recognized as such after his coronation by the Church. In civilized countries, no national leader is invested from on high,[5] he is considered solely from the point of view of the function he fulfils for the common good.

Still in the political sphere we note the "desacralizing" nature of the new nationalisms. For example, we have seen Africa pass in ten years through a process of evolution which it took us several centuries to achieve. We have watched her pass from fetishism with its sacral character to a secular, and sometimes a Marxist, nationalism. And this transformation

[5] The Coronation of the English monarch still has a religious significance although it has lost all ties with the Stuart doctrine of the divine right of kings.—*Trans.*

has come about, with a few very rare exceptions, without the Church taking any part in it. We are far from the time when Alexander VI, after the conquest of America, decided how the newly discovered countries were to be divided between Spain and Portugal.

We not only see that the evolution of nations and states is taking place outside the sphere of religious jurisdiction, but also, on a lower plane, that other human communities are passing beyond the influence long exercised over them by spiritual authority. Until quite recently the parish was the link between members of a community. The church tower was the symbol of the village or ward. It sounded the alarm or called men to mobilization. The cemetery and the market were grouped around the church. Place names were generally Christian—St Martin, St Denis, etc. Today the place of assembly is the Town Hall, the Labour Exchange, or more often still, the commercial centre. The cemetery has become secularized and streets are named after men famous in the secular field.

In the field of thought and education, we note that knowledge, which was the monopoly of the Church in the Middle Ages, is now in the hands of the secular universities and schools. Philosophy is autonomous, law and the administration of justice have lost their sacral character and they too have become secularized.

One final sector at least seemed to be the refuge of the sacred, namely that of life, love and death. The entry of scientific knowledge into this field also has begun the process of desacralization. Painless childbirth and birth control witness to the fact that reason has penetrated this realm of fertility which had preserved its element of mystery much longer than the others.

Yet does this phenomenon of desacralization, this movemen from the religious to the secular, mean that modern man has lost his sense of the sacred? Some claim that this is the case. Personally, we incline to think that the sacred is a

structural element in human awareness. Hence every man feels a need, even though he will often refuse to admit it, to sacralize some activity, some form of culture or of leisure occupation, a person worshipped for his or her own sake; by allowing himself to reach a state of uninhibited infatuation and by his willingness to practise a form of unbridled idolatry, he is seeking, in some obscure way, that power unto salvation without which he cannot live.[6] This need in man is as imperative as hunger and thirst; it is the religion of unbelievers.

The place of the primitive worship of water, fire, sun and blood as the sources of life has now been taken by the worship of the sources of power, the dollar, oil, the secret of the atom with its spectacular practical applications, the film star, the gods of the stadium, musical virtuosi. All this is a projection of the kind of man each of us would like to be, intoxicated by power, skill, freedom and love. And so we are able to forget the disappointments of life and make ourselves immortal in a passing dream.

This, then, is a proof of the universal need of salvation which haunts mankind. These then are the distorted forms taken by a religious sense which can no longer make up its mind which god it should adore.

ATHEISM AS A FACTOR IN CIVILIZATION

Atheism as a factor in civilization fully reveals the form of awareness characteristic of godless man. There are men who declare that they will have nothing to do with the Church of Christ. These men are among the most active and they are atheists who have nothing in common with people who have become dechristianized and have moved away from the Church.

[6] St Paul applies this word "power" to the risen Christ. For him, the Gospel is a power of salvation given by God in order to save those who believe. And St Luke, writing of Christ's miracles, states that power came forth from him.

These absolute pagans are capable of a disinterestedness, a solidarity and a trust in life which many professed Christians might well envy. Their life has an aim, they have a noble view of the family, of love, money and happiness. They have a certain respect for religious convictions but only in so far as these are supported by a life of generosity. They have a keen sense of the need for the masses to progress both economically and politically. They hope their children will enjoy a type of happiness which will be both a triumph of technology in the service of man and the fruit of the wisdom which the nations at peace, and peace-loving, will at length have acquired as the result of a widespread knowledge of psychology and the distribution of responsibility at all levels of society.

These cultural factors and others as well are certainly not always found in the pure state as some imagine. There are illusions and sin present in them and certain of their values are in fact immoral and amoral rather than ethical. But it would be a gross error to reject *en bloc* the values of a new cultural world which has turned its back on God, and we should be guilty of misunderstanding our contemporaries if we ignored the spread of this positive and constructive atheism.

This massive and collective phenomenon is not so much a system evolved by thinkers (although such post-war writers as Sartre and Camus have had a remarkable influence on a whole generation of young people),[7] as a series of attitudes

[7] The late Albert Camus is one of the most impressive witnesses to contemporary atheism. He once admitted that "if he had turned away from God it was not so much because of any fundamental atheism as from his wish not to betray human life composed as it is of suffering and misery of every kind". In *La Chute,* he gives his views on the bankruptcy of God and at the same time admits the Christian atavism of atheists: "We have to choose our master. God is no longer in the fashion: the word 'God' is now meaningless: it is not worth while using it when it runs the risk of shocking anyone. Whether men are atheists or pious, Muscovites or Bostonians, they all have Christianity in their blood. And yet there isn't a ha'p'orth of Christianity among them."

often adopted without reflection, a point of view and a manner of life which find adepts among believers and mould social institutions. This is one more reason why we should give our attention to it and attempt to be objective and respect its values and the people in whom these values are incarnated. This is a prerequisite condition for evangelization and for the "baptism" (to use an expression frequently employed) of a new civilization.

Atheism is obviously one of the major components of modern society.[8] As man proceeds to conquer the universe he interprets his conquests in the realms of science, technology and psychology as indicating God's retreat from history. As we have seen, the religious facts of yesterday become today purely secular phenomena. Things the believer treats as matter for contemplation are considered by the technicians as material to be transformed. Everything is included under the headings of phenomena, problems, laws. And there is no place for God in the estimates man makes of his successful achievement. "What," he says, "is the use of God? What is faith for?"

In actual fact, atheism has varying forms, ranging from "practical" atheism (that "comfortable atheism" based on a

[8] The strict sense of the word "pagan" (or unbeliever) is "non-baptized". In a more general sense, and one that is a pointer to the realities of the situation, the great mass of people, baptized or not (and this includes even practising Christians) habitually react without any reference to God, and so are "practical" atheists. This caused Cardinal Saliège to remark: "There are atheists among churchgoers."

It is significant, we may add, that from the second to the fourth century, it was the pagans who called Christians atheists because they abstained from joining in idolatrous worship. Later, from the sixteenth century onward, Catholics, Calvinists and Lutherans used the term for one another, not without a certain contempt. In the eighteenth, Catholics were still called atheists by people who did not share their faith. We always find such expressions to indicate those who do not think as we do.

In his Epistle to the Ephesians (2. 12) St Paul speaking of the pagans calls them atheists, because they are idolators, that is, they do not recognize the true God and set up idols in his place.

refusal to be bothered, of which Mounier had something to say) to militant atheism which seeks to eliminate God as a hindrance to man's progress.

It is because of its militant atheism that Marxism takes its stand against God. It would be as wrong to confine the causes of atheism to the spread of Marxism as to minimize the influence of Marxist theories in justifying practical attitudes which are for the most part illogical.

The great pundits of Marxism denounce religion as an irrational state of mind and, according to them, "the godless are not those who refuse to provide the masses with a god, but those who refuse to accept the idea of God prevalent among the masses". In their view, God is obviously the God of the ready made, a prefabricated God, who holds all the winning cards, and hence our freedom is only an illusion. "God is the most flagrant instance of alienation. The more religious a man is, the less he is a man.... Atheism is a denial of God, and man's existence is established by this denial of God." According to Marx, as E. Borne reminds us, when God is finally forgotten, we shall know that mankind has achieved perfect unity.

In this indictment of the atheists, we have seen that we are dealing with an unacceptable caricature of Christianity, a complete disavowal of Jesus Christ and of his redeeming Incarnation. But it is not without importance for our faith that we should note that this is so and also that we should admit that the behaviour of certain Christians provides arguments in support of this prejudice against God. We are thinking of a certain type of religiosity, a lack of courage, religious fatalism in the face of trials, resignation in the face of injustice: "It is God's will. There's nothing we can do about it."

Atheism attacks a religious "idealism" lacking in substance and with no grip on reality. It is therefore an invitation to us to purify our faith of certain limitations we put upon it. In his search for true greatness, in his quest of a form of salvation for mankind, in his respect for human values, his

insistence upon truth, his desire for unity, his passion for progress and for liberty, his sense of human solidarity and responsibility, the atheist shows himself apt for a dialogue with the Word of God.

The religious meaning of the Marxist phenomenon

Marxist atheism does not attack living faith at its foundations, but it does demand certain doctrinal statements from the missionary Church. Further, the undeniable existence of a Marxist world, well-defined sociologically and with its own cultural institutions, has a religious significance for the Church. Communism doubtless is a sign of the impatience of God whom man has attempted to drive out of the historical process. It also is a sign of the absence of Christians in the ordering of the temporal city, their unconcern at the presence of established abuses, their tacit acceptance of the most flagrant forms of injustice in our society such as slums and the problem of hunger.

It is essential that theologians and parish priests, acting under the authority of the Church's hierarchy, should define the precise nature of this confrontation of the Church with Marxism from the point of view of the faith. The fact that Marxism opposes the Church impels her also to turn to Christ who has his answers for every epoch, answers that are always old and yet ever new: *nova et vetera.*

Yet, is it not a fact that we pay far more attention to the sociological realities of this Marxist world as it continues to expand, than to its religious meaning which ought to lead us to purify our faith and intensify our apostolic efforts? Are we not prone to adopt an attitude of self-defence, even of aggressiveness, as we face the Marxist endeavour, rather than to invent new forms of evangelization, to demand a form of catechetical teaching more suited to our times and to develop, in ourselves and in others, a more evangelical Christianity?

From the point of view of the apostolate Marxism raises questions whose range goes beyond anything we had hitherto

thought possible. The influence of Marxism extends beyond its atheistic ideological pressure in the so-called Communist countries. It exercises a great and widespread fascination over those nations which are in search of economic institutions and are faced with fundamental choices (this is especially true of underdeveloped countries). And it increasingly infects the proletarian sectors in every country especially where the living presence of the Church is no longer active. We may well ask whether this widespread Marxist influence in vast countries, in geographical and cultural areas and in so-called Christian regions, is sufficiently counterbalanced by an effort of doctrinal thought, general pastoral activity and a missionary attitude throughout the Church. Are Christians anxious "to be present" in paganized areas and in the collective realities of our time? Do they really feel the need to make genuine contact if they are to provide a corporate witness? Are the persecutions in certain countries seen by us as an opportunity to question ourselves as to our love for those who are responsible for this persecution? For the Gospel commands us to pray for those who persecute us and to do good to them.

At rock bottom, Marxism reveals itself as an overall human endeavour in which man is considered capable of redeeming himself, in which there is a radical denial of God. There are always fragments of truth in every error[9] as well as undeniable values such as compassion, justice, hope and salvation which

[9] "Speaking very generally, we would note that in this world of ours there is no such thing as total error, that is, error which does not contain some aspect of the truth. The best way for the Christian to fight against error has always been, and always will be, not to combat it as absolute but first of all to discover the element of truth it contains and to recognize the rights of this partial truth by showing how it achieves its fullness in a continually increased understanding of the Christian synthesis. *Nova et vetera*: the providential use of error is that it always offers opportunities for those who witness to the truth to discover in the latter certain aspects or values which have not hitherto been sufficiently brought to light" (Fr Féret in *Vérité et vie*, 391, p. 41).

offer themselves as opportunities for the preaching of the Gospel. It is not enough to denounce errors, we must bring out the essentials of Christianity in a catechetical teaching that has been deepened by a return to the sources of revelation and tradition (in particular, the eschatological vision of history, hope in its supernatural sense, the purification of our faith, the meaning of the Bible and the Church, must all be restored).

Our catechetical teaching is not suited to minds formed or affected by Marxism since it fails to emphasize the mystery of Christ. Nor are we able to detect the signs of Marxist influence on our active Christians. We are scarcely aware that Marxism confines the moral conscience to the political field, diminishes awareness of and respect for objective truth, does away with any idea of and pleasure in all constructive thought outside the scope of revolutionary action and dulls the true sense of the demands of the spiritual order in temporal matters.

Laymen engaged in Catholic Action (the latter under Providence is now developing into one of the Church's institutions in our time) are God's answer, in the realm of facts, to the Marxist phenomena. But from this point of view, is Catholic Action considered with all the attention, boldness and respect it needs, together with the help it requires from a mission among the workers and from priests who are in real contact with working-class conditions?

As Christians watch the ascendancy of Marxism, it is not enough for them to reply "the Church has spoken" and then add a few quotations from the pope or the bishops. This is too facile and often an ineffective "intellectual victory". Communism is what it is, but it is a fact of which we have to take account. When the questions at issue are war and peace, housing, social injustice, the only language unbelievers can understand is that of action undertaken and risks incurred. What the mass of unbelievers requires of us is not only the formulation of doctrine but doctrine lived. Whether or not

an answer is to be given to Marxism as an inverted form of Christianity depends on the willingness of Christians to be converted and to commit themselves to action.[10]

When St Peter spoke to the early Christians, he did not say: "Be ready to refute all the objections you hear", but he gave them this advice: "If anyone asks you to give an account of the hope that you cherish, be ready at all times to answer for it. . . ." (1 Peter 3. 15.)

[10] Capitalism, although it is not an atheist ideology, must be included among the influences favouring dechristianization and atheism because of the materialist atmosphere it creates and its manifold attacks on the rights of the human person. As a body, Christians do not seem to appreciate how harmful it is. On the other hand, active Christians have discovered that it is not primarily Marxism but the practical materialism for which capitalism is responsible which, *all around us*, is present as a force working for the breakdown of faith.

On November 15th, 1946, Pius XII denounced the misdeeds of capitalism: "Modern cities with their continual development, their huge populations, are the typical product of the domination of large-scale capitalism over economic life and so over man himself. It too often happens that economic life and the use of capital are not regulated by human needs in accordance with their natural and objective importance, but, on the contrary, by capital and its profit motives which determine what needs are to be satisfied and to what extent. It is not human work destined to serve the common good which attracts capital to itself but, on the contrary, it is capital which gives the impetus to work in this place or that and moves men around as though they were balls in a game."

PART III

A NEW MISSIONARY ERA

CHAPTER V

THE MISSION AND THE MISSIONS

There is little space here for a theology of the mission. And it is not easy in a few pages to examine the basis of the mission and to define and describe it. Yet our regret that this is so is tempered by the realization that valuable books dealing with this subject have been increasing in numbers over the past few years. We begin by getting rid of erroneous ideas. The mission is neither directly nor formally a philanthropic, social, cultural or civilizing task. Its aim is not human progress on the human level, but man's salvation. It is not a human, it is a divine task. It is not a form of domination or imperialism. As Pius XII clearly showed in his 1945 Christmas Message, the Church is not an empire, she seeks only voluntary members and she desires to influence them in the depths of their being. The mission is built up of men and of human communities. It must not be confused with the apostolate in the general sense since it is concerned directly with men who are pagans, with pagan communities and realities. It is not even an effort to bring about individual conversions, it aims at collective conversions. It seeks to "plant", to establish the Church in regions, environments and areas which do not know her.

We may now put forward a technical definition of the mission: *it is that spiritual activity which, originating in the Trinitarian processes, consists in preaching the Gospel to*

non-Christians and in establishing among them in an indigenous and stable fashion the entire Christian economy for the sake of their own salvation, the full development of the Mystical Body and the glory of the Father through the Son in the Spirit.

We begin with this definition because upon it depend all the issues discussed in the following pages and this discussion will both illustrate and confirm the definition. We therefore use the term in its strict sense by contrast with the other forms of the apostolate such as catechetical instruction, pastoral work in the normal meaning of the word, and the spiritual direction of Christians. Our definition, which is modelled on the teaching of Pius XII in *Evangelii praecones*, is centred on missionary preaching (the Kerygma) but includes the "planting" of the Church in a given country, in a social environment or a sociological sphere. The word "planting" has to be understood in a rational sense: "The Church can only be said to be founded in a given area if she controls her own affairs, has her own churches, her own native clergy, her own means of subsistence, in a word, she must depend on none but herself" (Decree *Lo sviluppo*, May 20th, 1923). Of course, the mission is never completed, every Christian has to be reconverted time after time until he comes to the end of his life, yet the mission properly so called consists in bringing a non-Christian to the faith or in marking some non-Christian reality with the stamp of the Gospel, it consists in solidly establishing a young Church which is still in a frail and delicate state. It is also true that an apostle who brings any individual person to the faith in any country in the world may be called a missionary, but he will only be genuinely one if he is working in an environment that is formally and in practice pagan, only if the particular achievement of effecting a conversion to the faith takes place within a collective, communal mission situation.

The mission is rooted in the processes of the Trinity. It originates in the Father and is destined to return to him. It is

wholly contained in the inner, eternal life of God and in the history of salvation. The logical sequence of facts reveals to us the Father, the generation of the Word, the procession of the Spirit, the temporal mission of the Word in the Incarnation, the temporal mission of the Spirit at Pentecost, the mission of the Church, and finally the Father who will be all in all. The mission is, as it were, a continuation of the process of love in the Trinity, the product of its emergence, of its bursting forth into time. In the divine order, all is love; the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Redemption, the Church and her mission, mankind's return to God.

There is in truth only one missionary, Christ, and one mission, Christ's. The mission of the Spirit is its other aspect, its complement and fulfilment. Christ's mission takes two forms, a personal form which consisted in achieving mankind's salvation for the glory of God and in founding the Church, and a collective form which is to last until the end of time and is the gathering together of all things and of all men in the sanctifying love of the Father, the regrouping of mankind into one single divine family. This is the gathering together, throughout the world and through all the centuries, of the children of God who were scattered abroad, as St John says. The great mysteries of Christ are therefore indissolubly linked with the mission, his Incarnation, his redeeming death, the Eucharist, the resurrection and his triumphal return.

Since in the last analysis there is only one mission, Christ's, the Church alone can be "sent", since she alone is the Body and Bride of Christ, Christ continued and fulfilling himself on earth throughout the centuries. In the mission, the Church is both the means and the end. As she spreads over the earth, the Church is building up her own body. She is the instrument by means of which the faith is spread and she works at the building of her own body, at her own fulfilment until she reaches the full stature of the perfect Christ, until the heavenly Jerusalem becomes a fully accomplished fact.

This involves many applications of the first importance as

regards the mission. The duty of evangelization is the primary duty incumbent on the popes, as they themselves have declared. The Church by her very nature is a missionary Church. If she ceased to be a missionary Church she would cease to be herself. Her head bears the permanent and urgent responsibility for the evangelization of the whole world. But this responsibility is shared by all the bishops as a collegiate body with the pope and with each other. This collegiate responsibility of the bishops is becoming increasingly clear both in pontifical documents and in the writings of modern theologians. It arises from the fact that the bishops are the successors of the apostles to whom was entrusted the evangelization of the world and that they possess the fullness of Christ's priesthood which is essentially a missionary priesthood.

Hence, as the popes have said over and over again, this missionary duty is particularly incumbent on priests. Men and women in the religious orders are also called upon to undertake it, as in a more general sense are all Christians. Some of the latter have realized this, as is evidenced by the foundation of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith by Pauline Jaricot in 1822. This doctrine has been frequently expounded by recent popes, especially since Benedict XV's apostolic letter *Maximum illud* (1919). Unfortunately, public opinion has remained largely unaffected by this teaching perhaps because it has not been sufficiently incorporated into catechetical instruction, preaching and Catholic Action as practised. Christians have been roused rather by contemporary events such as the upheavals due to the last war, the emergence of Asiatic and African nations and the discovery of the fact of underdevelopment. This is a pity for, on the one hand, the international world-wide awakening of Christians has come late in the day, and on the other, it risks being influenced by political, economic and social rather than religious considerations. It is high time parishes, schools, colleges and Catholic Action groups were more closely associ-

ated with the world-wide life of the Church and with the spiritual renewal of the world. Pius XII pointed out that the missionary spirit would find ample nourishment in the dogmas of the Communion of Saints and the Mystical Body.

THE MISSION AND CATHOLICITY

The Catholicity of the Church will help us to give its full significance and scope to the idea of the mission. What is at issue is nothing less than the realization in time and space of the universal "recapitulation" of all things in Christ. As Fr Congar has said: "Catholicity is above all else the capacity of the Church's principles to assimilate, perfect, sublimate, win and unite to God the whole of man, all men and all values." The universality of the Church is a consequence of the Father's plan of Redemption, implemented in history by the redeeming Incarnation of the Son, continued throughout time by the life-giving activity of the Church whose desire is in all things to glorify the Father with the Son. All things are to be integrated in the Mystical Body of Christ, all things are to sing the glory of the Father; all men, all nations, all cultures and civilizations, all human realities and technological inventions.

Hence the mission is not only exercised in the geographical and ethnic spheres but also in those of civilization and sociology. In other words, in addition to the mission in the traditional sense, which is to integrate all nations in the Church together with their specific mentalities and values, there is room for other types of mission. Everything that comes into existence on the earth must be marked with the seal of Christianity. This is true of the worlds we see arising or consolidating themselves in our own times, the world of the underdeveloped countries and also the working-class world, the world of the peasant, the worlds of science, technology, the press, literature, leisure, sport, the cinema, radio and television, the family, politics, etc. Those who desire to

Christianize these different values, mentalities and human communities have a right to be called missionaries. Fr Teilhard de Chardin, for instance, was a genuine missionary in the field of science and in the modern world. From this point of view there are many human groups among which the mission has only just begun: financiers, politicians, university teachers, the members and experts working in international organizations, the various élites at every level and of every grade (technicians, trades unionists, students, workers from overseas, etc.). The missionary duty in the strict sense, that is, the immediate duty to bear witness and to preach the Gospel, is directly incumbent upon many more people than appears at first sight. We must take a broader view and persuade ourselves that wherever pagan realities and groups are found, the missionary spirit has a field in which to act, material on which to set its mark, and which it may fashion for the glory of God. When we say this we are not abandoning our former point of view. We are facing a genuine pagan situation and a collective reality that must be imbued with Christian influence, saved and integrated into the Body of Christ. The definition of the mission we gave on a former page is applicable here without any unwarranted straining of its meaning and without recourse to sheer analogy.

Missionary work will therefore be faithful to the doctrine of adaptation or, as we prefer to say, of assimilation and integration. Christianity must adopt the sound principles and the values of all the nations and of all human groups, of all forms of art, language, thought and sensibility. All that determines men's way of life, all that they do, belongs to Christ and must be incorporated into Christianity and into the Church, All that is beautiful, just and healthy can help to fashion and shape the City of God. As there is a Chinese or African way of being a Christian, so there will be a working-class, a technological, a scientific way of being a Christian. The Church waits to receive all these values without which she cannot fully be herself. She wishes to sing

God's glory in all human tongues, in every situation, in every state of mind that is compatible with faith. She stands for unity, but unity in diversity not in uniformity. She respects all genuine values, she purifies them, re-establishes them where necessary, but she also saves them and brings them to the realm of the eternal. She does not require the Russian or the Papuan to think, pray and live his faith like a Frenchman or an Italian. She allows, she wants a scientist or a technician, a journalist or a film actor to be a Christian in his own way, provided that the faith and morals are respected in the situation in which he finds himself. She wants to bring the reign of Christ to every mind and to every mentality. From all these diverse elements, she creates a perfect harmony. Everywhere she sees children of God, and it is within her fold that they preserve their liberty and their personality not only at the individual level but also at that of the collective mentality. Her mission will never be finished for new forms of collective life will always come into being as well as new habits of thought, feeling and expression.

A TURNING-POINT IN THE CHURCH'S MISSIONARY TASK

Thus the historical evolution of the Church's missionary work is evident, as is also the fact that we are now entering a new missionary age whose characteristics may be summed up in three words, it is the era of mutual *exchanges*, of *service* and of *unity*. A statement of Pius XII's throws light on the missionary epoch of the future:

> The Church is supranational both because she loves all nations and peoples with the same love and also because she is nowhere a stranger. She lives and grows in all the countries of the world, and all the countries of the world contribute to her life and growth. In the past, the Church's life in its visible aspect manifested its vigour in the countries of our ancient continent of Europe, and flowed out from it like a majestic

> river over what it was then still possible to call the periphery of the world. Today, on the contrary, we see her as the institution in which life and energy are shared among all the members of the Mystical Body of Christ on earth. Many countries in other continents have long since passed beyond the missionary stage of their ecclesiastical organization. They are governed by their own hierarchy and are conferring on the whole Church spiritual and material benefits of which in former times they were merely recipients (Christmas Message, 1945).

Many African and Asian countries are passing from the mission status and already have their own Church. These young Churches, with their local bishops and their cardinals, are contributing on an increasing scale to the life and government of the Universal Church. While we continue to give to them, they also give to us, and it is well that this should be so. The era of mutual exchanges has begun, charity has become reciprocal and moves in both directions. The Church will gain in strength as a result and her Catholicity will become more extensive in the concrete.

Consequently, the foreign missionary is increasingly becoming a subordinate, a helper, an auxiliary, a servant of the local Church. This demands of him a change of mind and attitude which some will not succeed in achieving. They will do well to make way for men who are younger or more flexible and modern. Considerable delicacy, patience, humility and spiritual poverty are needed. The missionary's motto is more than ever that of St John the Baptist: "He must increase and I must decrease." By "he" we mean Christ in a given place, the local Church. Every priest must attempt to train a responsible and committed laity, but the foreign priest (and religious) must also make way for the local clergy. This is the lesson implied in the encyclical *Princeps pastorum* (1959).

We are at long last entering on the era of unity and of the concentration of all our efforts, those of the foreign and local clergy in accordance with the directives of the popes,

those, too, of the old Christian countries and the young Churches, and finally the effort made by the foreign and the home missions. And of this we shall have something to say in a moment. It is no longer possible to work independently of one another in watertight compartments. The same problems arise everywhere. Everywhere we have to face a technological and secularized civilization, Communism and militant atheism. Experiments and discoveries made in one sector must be of use to the others. Men and institutions can now be exchanged thanks to the ease and speed of communications. One of the most urgent needs is to establish everywhere schools for the training of leaders. If necessary these schools should be grouped on a regional or continental basis. The modern world is issuing an immense challenge to Christianity. All our forces and all our vital energies must be brought into operation if man is to be saved both in the human and the supernatural senses of the word. The mission has a new aspect. It is everywhere and every Christian must take his share in it. The time for sleep has passed. We are standing on the slopes of a volcano and the situation grows daily worse.

THE FOREIGN AND THE HOME MISSIONS

It is not easy to give a clear account of the uses of a word such as "mission" with its many applications and the magic of its past. Nor can we attempt in a few pages to write its history in detail. We can only provide a few pointers, a few interesting historical notes, and suggest something of what the future may hold.

The issue is confused at the outset by Canon Law and current usage, which uses the word in three senses. There are the missions to distant parts and, at home, those to dioceses and parishes. In 1926 Pius XI wrote:

> The missions are divided into two major categories: foreign and home missions. We are reminded of the significant words

of our well-loved St Philip Neri: "Stay here, your mission is in Rome." This he said not because Rome was a missionary territory but because even in Rome, as everywhere else, there is room for missionary work. There always will be so long as there are souls to be brought to the light, saved and led back to the paths of virtue.

There is a statement by Pius XII which is even more precise and significant. As far as I know, this is the first time home missions are mentioned in a papal document devoted to missionary work. At the beginning of the encyclical *Fidei Donum* (1952), Pius XII explained that the choice of Africa as its theme did not mean that he had forgotten other apostolic fields:

> May then this fervour be directed towards the dechristianized areas of Europe and the vast regions of South America. May it show pity towards the spiritual distress of the innumerable victims of modern atheism, particularly the young who are growing up in ignorance and sometimes in hatred of God. These are necessary and urgent tasks demanding of all a new outburst of apostolic energy which will raise up immense armies of apostles like those of the Church at the dawn of her existence.

Thus Pius XII himself overruled the distinction we pointed out above and abolished the contradiction between the two types of mission.

It seems therefore that the opposition between foreign and home missions no longer exists and that it is becoming increasingly clear that they are complementary and interdependent. The theology of the mission as outlined above shows where the basis of this concentration and this identification lies. We merely express the hope that the name and the idea of the mission will preserve their strict sense and that the word will be used with care. The mission consists in evangelizing those who are not Christians or, more precisely, in evangelizing masses of men and environments which are non-Christian. Even a fervent apostolate is not missionary unless

it goes out to meet these pagan or paganized worlds. The geographical idea of the mission is no longer the only one, there is now a sociological mission and a mission to the world of the new civilizations.

THE PROBLEMS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

What we have just said is true even of the foreign missions. A recent monograph on the Madura mission in South-East India[1] will throw more light on our preceding pages and confirm our theological conclusions.

The first stage is that of evangelization and it is famous for the outstanding men who inaugurated it. On this eastern coast of India, Christianity did not penetrate until the sixteenth century with the arrival of the Portuguese. St Francis Xavier did the pioneer work on the Fishery Coast. But although many missionaries were to find their vocation by following his shining example, he left few concrete and lasting traces in this area. Fr de Nobili with his method of integration, and his adoption of the way of life of the people of the country, opened the door although in the midst of formidable difficulties. He invented the writing of Tamil prose, created Tamil Catholic terminology and literature and made contact with the élite of the population. In 1693 the country was hallowed by the martyrdom of St John de Britto. In the eighteenth century, Fr Constant Beschi entered the front rank of Tamil literature. Then came the period of trial, the unhappy dispute over the so-called Malabar rites and the suppression of the Jesuits.

The latter returned to the area in 1838, and the second period of the mission, the period of its institutions, began. A great effort was made to establish secondary and higher education. This tended to give some prestige to a religion which was despised, and awakened the admiration of the ruling classes. The local clergy, whom the missionaries had

[1] André Rocaries, *Quatre cents ans aux Indes* (Paris, Fayard, 1960).

trained from the beginning, began to grow in numbers. Local seminaries, noviciates and congregations were established.

Between 1920 and 1930 the third and last stage began with the Indianization of the Church, the establishment of a genuinely Indian Church. Dioceses were separated from the original mission and entrusted to the Indian clergy. The latter, both secular and regular, now forms a large majority. The Church is beginning to live her own life. She is no longer a mission but a Church. Foreign missionaries are only auxiliaries of the local clergy and a number of them opted for Indian nationality when India became independent. It is true that Catholics are still a small minority (three per cent in Madura, one per cent in India as a whole) but Christianity no longer appears to be a foreign religion or a Western manifestation. Thanks to the persistent efforts of India's apostles from the outset, prejudices have disappeared, a different view of our faith is now current and Nehru himself admits that Christianity is part of the nation's spiritual heritage.

But at the very time when Christianity has been granted the right of citizenship in India, it finds itself confronted by a new task. It is called upon to humanize and christianize the invading forces of a soulless technology, to exorcize and to guide the desire for social progress and human development:

> We do not doubt that India is able to bring to the common treasury of the Church its own variety of holiness and spirituality. This great people, which seems to have rediscovered itself during the past few years, has its own particular type of art, culture and intellectual speculation. We may well wonder whether the inroads of a soulless technology claiming to ensure economic and social progress may not involve the risk of losing this precious heritage. It is for the Church to give its true value to this rich inheritance and to breathe a new soul into it while at the same time welcoming and cooperating to the full with all the necessary developments. St Paul says that everything is to be born again in Christ (Ephes. 1. 10) and this

is the very meaning of universal redemption and of missionary activity (A. Rocaries, *op. cit.*, pp. 119–20).

A new missionary era is therefore opening before us. Throughout the world (and Pius XII's teaching remains of immense value here) we have to distinguish in the new civilization between what is to be welcomed and what is not. Not that we have to erect barriers against progress and return to the spinning-wheel or to sailing ships. But neither must we allow ourselves to be swept along by the dehumanizing, secular and atheist current of the times. By making the necessary distinctions the Church not only saves herself but man and the traditional values of Indian spirituality in the case we are considering. Once again, she takes up the defence of culture and of the mind, of religion and of all that is best in mankind.

Not all missionaries are yet conscious of these problems at least in all their scope and importance. However, technical schools in considerable numbers have been opened in India. The Poona Social Institute has been established. In South India Catholic students have organized themselves and their study weeks take into account all the different elements of the modern apostolate. They are aware that the destiny of the Church and of the world is involved and that there is no avoiding the encounter of these two great forces. The challenge of the modern world to Christianity is manifold and the Church's mission must accept it loyally and at every level. There is the demographic challenge, the challenge of underdevelopment and increasing poverty, the challenge of a technological and scientific civilization which attempts to invade every department of life and claims that it can explain and that it ought to dominate everything. And finally, there is the challenge of mass civilization in which all the others are included.

CHAPTER VI

THE PRIEST WORKERS, ONE TYPE OF HOME MISSION

We had not originally intended to mention the priest workers if only because of the great hidden suffering these men have endured, because too of the grossly intemperate language of certain sections of the press which has often caused confusion in men's minds and thrown discredit unfairly on the Church by an arbitrary interpretation of her intentions. We witnessed the confusion brought about in the consciences of many priests and laymen when this effort, whose beginnings were so full of promise, was stopped, and we too possess no authority to reconsider the interpretation of the Roman decisions which withdrew priests from the world of work.

Yet we are increasingly convinced that the presence of these few hundred priests in the world of work was not only the outstanding feature of a period rich in new apostolic activities, but also, in spite of the fact that it has now ceased, continues to have a prophetic and universal meaning for the Church. The experiment is typical of the Church in her missionary activity. As such it remains one among the invitations which, in our times, urge us to undertake the evangelization of non-Christian environments.

Twelve years of contact with priest workers, who for long had friendly relations with our parish community, allow us

to bear our own personal witness. Our parishioners were quite aware that these curates who were sent to work were delegates of the Christian community in the working-class world. They knew too that this was not an underhand way of filling the church or of practising proselytism. They understood that these priests were to give themselves wholly to their comrades, so they agreed not to monopolize them and to accept the inevitable separation that was involved. But they also knew that we were one with them in the same priesthood. Priests were going out to work because both laymen and clergy wished to be better Christians. Later, we were able to see how genuine this bond between us was, when we noted how anxious our men and women were to be kept informed about the priest workers. News of them was treated as a family affair. Many unbelievers came to the same conclusion. "If you didn't belong to the Church," they would say to a priest worker, "there would be no sense in your being here."

Among the converts who were baptized during those years at the Easter vigil, there were some who had been influenced by this witness of priests in the working-class world before they had asked to be received into the Church. Others had been friendly with one or other of them before recovering the faith of their childhood.

Certainly the priest workers did more than anyone else to make me conscious of the working class. Priests, who had been my own curates, taught me to look at working-class life with new eyes, to see even passing contacts in a new light, and to grasp the human realities in a newspaper or during a visit to some quarter of the parish. We now feel that we are involved when there is a strike, and examples of injustice stir us to action. Under the influence of these priests, I learned to have a new faith in mankind. I realized more clearly that there is a kind of mistrust of man which dims one's faith in God.

To suggest that I have made staggering discoveries in the sphere of pastoral work with the help of priest workers may

sound paradoxical since priest workers are not concerned with pastoral work in the parish. But in actual fact these men who have undertaken the exploration of unknown territories have made me see, through the very way in which they behave, that the parish is a stock that grows in Christian soil. The wholly gratuitous charity of the worker priests with its wider sweep, their profound respect for unbelievers, the way they share the pain and the joy of other men, their renunciation of all illusory prestige, these will help the parish one day to recover its true nature.

If we are among those who hope that priests will once more enter the world of work (in new ways which take care to safeguard the character of the priesthood), it is because of our twelve years of experience and contact with some of them, and because we know that, thanks to them, the distant murmur of the Good News of the Gospel has reached the ears of the present world. Many workers knew that these priests, who shared their labours, and the neighbouring parish which did its best to give them a welcome, belonged to the same Church. And so, at those times when they had any contact with the parish, they felt less out of their element.

This "distant murmur" in the neighbourhood was not unlike that which St Mark describes so well in his Gospel. The Good News of Jesus Christ spread like a rumour. What people heard about him amazed them long before they met him. "And the story of his doings at once spread through the whole region.... We never saw the like."

Would such changes of heart have been possible if we had only had our layfolk to listen to? For most priests, contact with active Christians will always be the chief means of initiation into the realities of working-class life and the irreplaceable element needed to complete their priestly activity. But it was desirable that, when faced with so tragic a situation, priests should experience in their own flesh and blood the deep longing of the working masses. It is obvious in our view that our great friendship with the worker priests and

our common past made it easier for us to listen to what they had to say.

The working-class movement is unknown territory as far as the Church is concerned. When we are considering unknown territories we do not begin by bringing the first explorers to book. When new land has to be reclaimed and evangelized, there are bound to be periods of uncertainty and of experiment, and a margin of error is always possible.

A working-class life means a complete upheaval for the priest who leads it. Let us not be like the guide whose intentions are excellent but who recites a lesson on swimming to a man who is struggling as best he may in a furious sea. And we must be on our guard against a certain ambiguity in the thought, if not in the words, of those who pass judgement when they have the authority to do so and in total ignorance of working-class life.

To those who point to the failings or even the apostasy of some of the worker priests, we would reply that great undertakings are not accomplished even in the Church except by a process of trial and error. And who is to estimate where responsibility lies in the case of priests chosen for this work without due consideration or of priests who were inadequately supported by the attitude of Christians in general or who had even to endure severe trials at their hands? Obedient sons of the Church as these priests were, they were judged by one school of thought as often as not without being given a chance to defend themselves. Are priest workers the only people likely to make mistakes? They are not the kind of men who fall in love with systems, who are content to do nothing, who justify some passing craze or other by arguments that are more or less theological, or who build up a theory on the foundation of a single fact. A priest worker soon ceases to be a juvenile.

We may remember the significant stir created abroad as well as in France by the announcement in 1953 that priest workers were to be abolished. We may also remember the

typical reactions of certain traditionally minded Christians who were eager to denounce any scandals they could point to or to emphasize that the priestly life and certain working-class conditions are incompatible. A good many of these Christians would have approved the remark of a parishioner in the Lyons area: "Rome has spoken at last! All these priests in mufti or dressed up as coal-men . . . it was undignified. They preferred delivering coal to conducting funeral services in the cemetery."

Perhaps the parochial clergy themselves, absorbed in their traditional tasks, did not realize the issues at stake in an endeavour which bishops, even those outside France, had gradually encouraged in their own struggle with the same kind of paganism. On the other hand it would be unjust not to mention the many proofs given by the bishops of their interest in the experiment, especially at the time of trial in 1953. "For a while the paternal link between the bishop and the faithful was renewed in a way that had not existed, as far as one could see, for a very long time" (A. Béguin).

The uncomfortable position of these worker priests in the Church, during the years when they were plunged into the working world, was nonetheless a "sign which men will refuse to recognize". The faith of every Christian who is strictly faithful to the Gospel should be such a sign.

They were suspected of having abandoned the life of prayer, yet they quite simply discovered that never in the course of their ministry had they had such a spirit of prayer. They had been forced to break with a great deal of their past, they had been thrown headlong into a way of life quite different from that of the ecclesiastical and middle-class world which had shaped their early years in the priesthood, they were conscious both of the spirit of solidarity around them and also shocked at all the human suffering sanctioned by established "disorder", they were misunderstood and even criticized sometimes by their former brethren, and they found that once they had become acclimatized to their new

life certain characteristics of their former parish life were becoming foreign to them. But this did not prevent them from having deeper, because more interior, links with other priests.

They were dispensed from preaching but in their living priestly experience in the world of the wage earners they found new possibilities in the field of catechesis and the preliminaries to the act of faith.[1]

"I learned from my workmates", said one of them, "how to earn my daily bread and I taught them how to earn the bread of eternal life." Their priestly poverty had become more evangelical by the very fact that they were living the life of the wage earners. They had become the hope of the poor. "The men who are poor", says St James, "(are) to be heirs of that kingdom which he has promised to those who love him." How many Christians realize the irreplaceable mission of the poor in the Church of Jesus Christ? The poor—those of whom Scripture speaks and whose poverty in spirit often goes with a very hard life—are heirs to the Spirit. "When the poor are no longer at home in the Church", wrote Fr Chenu, "it is not so much that the poor are without their Church as that the Church is without her poor." An active Christian worker put this in another but equally true and evangelical

[1] Here is a simple statement by Fr Michel Favreau, priest and worker, who died as the result of an accident at Bordeaux: "I find prayer is much easier here than in the rush and bother of preparations for meetings or parish bazaars. When you are carrying sacks or cases in the shadow of the derricks shaped like a cross it is easy to unite yourself with the crucified Christ. Every day is Good Friday. Temptations in the moral sphere are less serious and agonizing than in the life of a curate [he had been a curate previously]. The great temptation now is to be 'fed up' with the life, to refuse to enter fully into it, to find ways of escaping from it, ways of making it easier, in a word, to fail to make the mysteries of the Incarnation and the Cross come to life again in one's own existence. My Mass has a far greater meaning for me than it used to have. And I have discovered the Bible. But there is also the painful sense of feeling one is misunderstood by the vast majority of the parochial clergy, that one is as much a stranger as a true proletarian when one goes into a presbytery or a church."

way when he said: "If the Church is only open to the middle classes, then she is closed to the poor. If the Church is open to the poor, then she is open to everyone." The priest workers were thus the heirs of the message of St Francis of Assissi, only in a manner appropriate to our own times. We must not shatter the hopes of the poor in our day.

We may leave to the theologians and the sociologists the task of gradually revealing the outlines of this missionary epic, its origins in the distant past, its original character in our own times, the theology of the priesthood and of the laity which is involved in it, and the spiritual relationship it has with the development in spirituality personified in St Teresa of Lisieux and Charles de Foucauld. For us, concerned as we are with the future growth of the Church, the issue at stake in this missionary situation is what interests us, first of all for its own sake, but above all because of its prophetic meaning as regards the missionary status of the Church.

As far as evangelization is concerned, the issue at stake is obviously considerable. For the first time in religious history, thanks to the combined efforts of Catholic Action and priests in the world of work, the Gospel was brought to working men as working men. And this by the authentic presence among them of the Church in their actual working life in her priesthood and her laity. But, with the passage of time, it is becoming clear that the priest worker movement was opportune since it provided the Catholicity of the Church with a dimension which, had it not been for these priests, would have remained in some sense an abstraction. It is a strange paradox that such a Catholic phenomenon should often have been opposed on the score of being un-Catholic, and that the priest workers should have been accused of encouraging division between social classes and sectarianism within the Church. It is undeniable that in our time the majority of vocations to the priesthood come from families with a bourgeois, peasant or middle-class mentality and way of life. And this at a time when the working-class world is a stranger

to the Church. The mission of the priest workers was to provide the Church with deep roots in an environment which, in a sense, had to be previously "naturalized". This effort to give the Church back her universality in the concrete forms part of her universal mission properly so called.

Before and after the priest workers, other efforts, which have more or less found their place in the Church, have characterized the evangelization of those environments which are least open to the Gospel. In the past Fr Lebbe, who became a naturalized Chinaman, Fr Monchanin identifying himself with the Indians, with their mentality and their culture, Fr Peyriguère more recently among the Berbers of the Middle Atlas region, all have a striking kinship (at least at that deep level which transcends the difference between their situations) with those priest workers who foresaw the mystical implications of their own entry into the working-class world. And there is another similarity; missionaries in China have been forced to adopt means of subsistence which oblige them to become wage earners. And this was not the case a few years ago.

> A radical change in the missionary's way of life is taking shape under the pressure of economic necessities and the prevalent slogans which continually urge increased production. We feel that the example of the French priest workers has been a determining factor in this evolution which has led to the voluntary proletarianization of hundreds of priests and nuns. They are going to live as working men and women among the people they come to evangelize. The majority will be peasants, but their holdings will rapidly become model farms and sometimes stock-breeding centres. A number of them, like everybody else, have been given their land by the Communists. Others are starting cloth weaving shops, are becoming gardeners, manufacturers, businessmen, itinerant chemists.... One Chinese bishop is a pedlar selling the cheese made from beans known as Tu-Fu. Another, Mgr Fu, works the bellows of the stove in a large inn. Persecution has made them return instinctively to a life of evangelical poverty ("Chine nouvelle et Christianisme", in *Études*, March 1950).

TOWARDS A PASTORAL METHOD ADAPTED TO OUR TIMES

As we have already seen, collective factors whose influence is continually on the increase, because they are bound up with the phenomenon of industrial civilization, are modifying profoundly the data of a pastoral method suited to our times.

> The demographic explosion of the twentieth century, the mobility of the masses of the people who are constantly on the move (not only the countryfolk coming to live in the towns, but also people spending their summer holidays away from home, workmen away for the week-end, skilled workers continually moved from place to place according to the trends in the labour market), the concentration of industry round the towns with the consequent ribbon development of housing, shanty towns, mass undertakings, the great quarries of Casablanca, the *fabelas* of Rio de Janeiro, all these are essentially new and have caused profound changes in the conditions under which the Church's institutions have to establish their pastoral work (Michael Goison).

This extract shows how *a combined pastoral method*—a concerted effort to readapt the Church's organization to the new needs of a world she has to evangelize—will have to be flexible and continually evolving. There is no need to take fright or to lift our arms to heaven in a gesture of despair. This combined pastoral effort is a return to our Christian origins and of itself leads to a closer contact with the realities of human life. Although it is everywhere subject to the same doctrinal criteria, it does not excuse us from pastoral work adapted to levels of consciousness which vary according to regions and local environment.

Finally, if "individualism is a sin against the priesthood" (Pius XII), it is because it is an attack against its collegiate character. It is because priests are priests and our times require that priests should work together and should collabo-

rate with one another more extensively and with a greater sense of urgency. Priests working in the same parish were already brought together by the mere fact of living under the same roof, they already formed groups whose main purpose was mutual encouragement at the spiritual level; but in addition to this, teams of priests have speeded up the establishment of a *common pastoral front.*

This has had obvious advantages—economy of physical effort, a deeper understanding, a new style of preaching, a more broad-minded Catholic press, the greater authenticity of a liturgy which welcomes those Christians who merely stand on the threshold of the Church—but, above all, it provides a more favourable starting point for effective evangelization. Yet we would add that a combined pastoral method worthy of the name ought, in this field of evangelization, to give greater scope to the responsibilities incumbent on lay people at the various stages of reflection, choice of apostolic methods and their implementation.

The organization of pastoral work in the Church, as she faces a new set of realities, is still far too clerical, it is still the business of priests rather than of a cell in the Church, it still tries to improve existing organizations rather than to create others of a new kind, decisions are taken at top level instead of approval and authority being ultimately given to basic research.

MISSIONARY PARISHES

The parish's vocation is to be the strategic point of spiritual life, the place which tells us what charity is and nourishes it, the font in which all the human realities of the earthly city are brought to Christ. It too suffers from the convulsions of a period in a perpetual state of flux, and it encourages the work of evangelization to a greater or lesser extent in proportion as it adapts itself or not to the spiritual needs of its parishioners. But as we face the greater scope of a

pastoral method suited to our times we must not minimize the evangelizing nature of the most humble tasks of the ministry once they are undertaken from an apostolic standpoint.[2]

Especially in dechristianized environments, the parish appears as a relay station for action in a pagan situation, and this is a task linked with a mission going far beyond parochial interests. Parishes are just as necessary now as in the past, but they should be more aware of and more informed about their own limitations when the question of reaching the pagan world arises. How can they possibly reach the whole of human reality in the world of planning of which we have already spoken? How can they even be sufficient to christianize the whole human existence of those with whom they come into contact through the liturgical assembly and the Word of God?[3] What in fact can be done to give that complete education in the faith promised by the Church to the newly baptized, when routine and ultra-conservatism hold back Christians whose own vocation urges them to

[2] In 1943, Pius XII reminded us of "this silent daily work, often unseen, whose action is more than ever of decisive importance in our day, since all those souls won to Christ by new and unusual methods have eventually to become the responsibility of an active, continual and thorough ordinary ministry".

[3] Every man in the past had a fundamental connection with a given place. In those days it was enough to found the Church in a place for it to be solidly established there. But men are less and less attached to a given place. The situations they face, the relations they enter into are increasingly complex. Hence we find a type of parishioner who is a stranger in his own parish. "His inner existence is attached to other 'areas', and these do far more to give him a formation. And so, although he is not fully conscious of the fact, he will consider his parish as a 'service station' supplying certain 'spiritual' needs. He will only come under the influence of the Gospel in that sector of his being (and it is a very small sector) which realizes that it is a member of a parish and linked to the human beings who live in it. Meanwhile, the Gospel will perhaps not affect that other part of him which, for example, is attached to a given scientific environment. Hence his faith is always being called into question or does not seem disturbed by others' denial of it" (*Parole et mission*, Foreword, No. 9).

launch out into the deep? It is a fact that a certain type of clericalism in education mass-produces unbelievers whose only relic of their early formation is a political and bourgeois veneer which they ought to have outgrown. We may as well say with Bernanos that here and there we find parishes in a dying condition because they have failed to adapt themselves, their clergy have had too much to do, there has been a dead weight of tradition and custom, factors making for dechristianization have exerted pressure, practising Christians have become rarer and the arteries of the faith have hardened.

It is doubtless true that we should distinguish two phases in the process of making our parishes missionary. First there is the phase of purification. And this takes time for we can never purify ourselves enough. During this period our minds have to be opened to the missionary spirit and we have to learn to encourage the adoption of methods more suited to the times. There has to be a liturgy which is outwardly expressed in a more vital way, preaching which pays more attention to the real needs of the congregation, constant contact with the parents of the children who attend catechism and with all comers, apostolic exchanges of views with the few workers who are active Christians and a knowledge, based on sociology, of all that goes to form the collective life of the civil community: housing, transport, places of work, political activities, cultural organizations and information services. . . . The true face of Jesus Christ is revealed by a slow purification of men's consciences achieved by our sensitive awareness of human realities, by the attention we pay to men and to the institutions which they invent for themselves.

In working-class areas one of the major obstacles to evangelization in our parishes is a certain image of the Church which gives those outside the impression of a spirit of compromise; there is the business of money connected with religious ceremonies, ostentatious display which shocks the working-class mind, and favours shown to those who are wealthy and powerful. In these same districts, the parish

priest's constant desire, if he wishes to be a missionary, is not that his church should be full but that the workers should be able to enter it as workers and go out to the factory as Christians.

Catholic Action introduces the laity as such to the mind and heart of parish priests by man to man contact and by reflection on facts in the light of religion. This full and vital collaboration between priests and laymen is something very different from mere formal meetings in the sacristy or the presbytery. A parish where this collaboration exists shows that it is anxious to see the laity advance as a whole. It should also make sure that the Church is present on the various bodies which form the organic structure of the world of work and civil life: the trades union, subsidiary organizations, town councils, ward committees, influential associations. New values emerge in the faith of Christians and in the priest's sermons: the meaning of work, the demands of justice, willingness to accept responsibility, solidarity and loyalty, respect for the liberty of others. We have to rid ourselves of the spirit of conquest and become gradually aware of the universal character of our faith.

When they have heard many sermons stressing all this, the parishioners know that every baptized person is an envoy among his unbelieving brethren. They realize that they have a responsibility, that they are to be "the leaven of the Gospel" in their own surroundings. They have gained a more "catholic" vision of the universe since they are not so tempted to be satisfied with the soothing conformity of religious practice. They see too that their responsibility is world-wide, that their vocation is both missionary and universal. As Folliet has said: "If you are a Catholic, then those who are not must keep you awake at night."

When a parish has become more aware of the universality of the Church, it has to be made ready for effective missionary work. And this is done by sending out pioneers in advance into pagan territory. This parish, more aware than others of

its limitations, realizes how heavy a burden it carries in the sociological order and how encumbered the Gospel still is, in spite of years of concerted effort. And it is precisely because it knows that it is still too remote from the mentality, the work, life and leisure of the masses which surround it, that it feels ready to collaborate closely with priests and laymen who are sufficiently untrammelled by parochial institutions to blaze a trail for an authentic mission in "missionary areas" outside the Church.

We have to cease to be closed parishes, we must become open parishes and from open parishes pass on to the stage at which we are missionary parishes. And this demands a pastoral method which slowly prepares the parish to play an active rôle in the evangelization of the masses of mankind.

The liturgical movement and missionary effort

The various contemporary liturgical movements deserve special mention not only for the genuine influence they have been exercising over the consciousness of Christians for the past twenty years, but also because of the new demands raised by the advent of a new cultural world. It is a fact that certain types of modern man are becoming increasingly distinguishable from the typical Churchman. It is also true that the ways in which the liturgy expresses itself are less accessible to the kind of mind produced by science and technology.

A missionary Church cannot close its eyes to this difficulty in the sphere of communication. As regards liturgical pastoral methods in mission countries Cardinal Agagianian writes :

> Even in the celebration of the Eucharist, the missionary Church is now increasingly admitting native elements so as to encourage the active participation of the faithful in the various regions. As a beginning native music and the vernacular language are used to a certain extent. The missionaries thus show that they realize that the Church must, like a

good mother, be at home everywhere among her children. Benedict XV expressed this very clearly in *Maximum illud*: "The Church is Catholic and must nowhere find herself a stranger."

The current liturgical reforms meet this need for an enlightened and active participation in the Christian Mystery. And the liturgical movement, by returning to a sound tradition, has taken its stand against "folklore" and "druidical" Christianity which proliferates during periods of dechristianization. The meeting between the Church and modern man, in an adequate liturgical celebration, requires an effort on the part of every Christian to probe the secrets of this privileged and community expression of the faith, and it involves on the part of the Church a constant concern to adapt the ways in which the liturgy expresses itself to the needs of the new cultures.

There is always the temptation to greet some decree or other as the dawn of a liturgical revival, and this involves the risk of upsetting the balance of forces between the liturgical Mystery and secular life. As Fr Congar has said: "No liturgy is really worth bothering about if it cannot be carried out intelligently and with feeling by human beings."

Operation "Charity" and the mission

> We are to follow the truth, in a spirit of charity, and so grow up, in everything, into a due proportion with Christ, who is our head. On him all the body depends; it is organized and unified by each contact with the source which supplies it; and thus, each limb receiving the active power it needs, it achieves its natural growth, building itself up through charity (Ephes. 4. 15–16).

In a combined pastoral method, which takes account of the missionary concerns of the Church, works of charity occupy a place which, although traditional, is nonetheless typical of our times. It is a deplorable fact that vocations in the sphere of charitable works are becoming more rare. This is due to

the fact that Christians throw in their hand as they see how widespread poverty is, due also to the fact that everyone has his own problems in the material sphere. But a sluggish faith is also to blame.

Here again our ideas often lag behind the work of international organizations for mutual aid. And these are themselves sorely tried by the constantly changing nature of the urgent and complex tasks for which they are jointly responsible: destitution among refugees, insecurity among displaced persons and emigrants, famine and various other catastrophes.

It is from the unification of all parts of the body in Charity, as St Paul says, that a combined pastoral effort receives its stability without prejudice to the tasks proper to Catholic Action in different environments. When, for example, on Christmas night, our parishioners send off parcels in answer to an appeal for war victims in Italy, for starving people in India, for refugees from some recent disaster . . . when they adopt and collect money for North-African child refugees in Moroccan camps, then the mystery of Christmas becomes a genuine reality for them.

When children from the catechism class go in groups to visit old people in the neighbouring hospital with a teacher who is anxious to make them see with the eye of faith the distress of lonely folk, when these same children write to an Italian mother who is a war-victim: "As I am writing this letter, I am thinking that it is the same as if I was writing to Christ", then indeed they will learn and practise Christian love far better than if they had only learned about it from a chapter in the catechism.

The works of mercy and Catholic Action derive from the same missionary spirit which finds expression in two ways of loving others, complementary to one another and both signs of our faith. The concrete situations in which they are exercised are often connected. Action among large social groups is enriched by genuine contact with their victims.

"What is 'charity' today," Mgr Rodhain used to say, "will be social justice tomorrow."

On the whole, Catholics have welcomed the Welfare State while continuing to adapt Catholic organizations to the needs of the times. On the international plane, central Catholic organizations do important work in collaboration with State organizations (for example, the F.A.O. in its efforts to relieve famine throughout the world). This collaboration on the part of Catholics was one of the directives issued in 1951 by Pius XII to *Caritas internationalis*, the central organization for works of charity. Much remains to be done to promote the sense of international solidarity among Catholics, to make them anxious that Christians should share in the work of these great world-wide organizations as well as in relieving hidden poverty in the streets around them. A missionary Church is a Church which seeks charity and justice for all men.

THE CALL TO MISSIONARY WORK

Two besetting sins of Christians, habit and conservatism, are brought to the full light of day in a time which is characterized by a profound upheaval due to the increased speed of development. We have all had the painful experience of finding that a large number of practising Christians have a conservative mentality, a tendency to treat the parish as a ghetto, and an instinctive reaction against any changes in what they have been used to, liturgical innovations, new societies, the development of Catholic Action.

We must not confuse the sheer weight of habit with respect for tradition. One of the sources of the Church's inspiration is a sound tradition, a tradition which is a kind of living memory. It remains true, however, that, like the grain of mustard-seed in the parable, pastoral work, if it is to develop, requires a constantly adjusted balance between the data of continuity and their changing aspects which do not corrupt either revealed dogmas or the unchangeable Word of God.

According to St Paul, tradition consists in handing on to others the life which we have ourselves received. It is not an ossification, but a process of transmission. "Men who continue tradition are not those who are obsessed with the past, but those whose lives are lived in depth" (Y. de Montcheuil).

Although there has been a great renewal in the pastoral sphere, it is far from true that it has everywhere reached the level of the parish. Our pastoral work is far too often on a short term basis. Each parish undertakes apostolic activities which sometimes cancel one another out, and all this according to the views of successive parish priests or assistants. We find priests reversing their predecessor's policy on principle, and so the whole life of a parish is a series of alternate permissions and prohibitions. New societies take their place beside the old ones and the labels at present in fashion are applied to older, more or less moribund groups. This confusion, which exists in spite of diocesan policy, only hastens the advent of complete anarchy in the pastoral sphere and this at the very time when a combined pastoral effort everywhere has become an overriding necessity.

These indications of a general malaise in all departments of apostolic activity are not new. For the past fifty years our societies have been in the throes of what we may well call an acute crisis. Even where some groups seem to flourish, how many illusions lie hidden behind the outward appearance of a vitality which does not really exist?

Pastoral work in the sphere of the sacraments especially is in a state of confusion. Our liturgy is attended by people who have been baptized but not always evangelized. We give them the sacraments without sufficient instruction and without any coherent plan. We bring into the Church children who will later be exposed to the influence of a materialist environment. We welcome adults but without providing them with a genuine, that is, a community initiation into the parish. We seem to forget that conversion in their case not only

comes before baptism but is present throughout the whole of their sacramental life. We consider that the reception of the sacraments is an achievement to be duly noted down as such and to be kept up, rather than the indispensable food of a faith which has to be continually renewed by a series of conversions. Finally, our preaching is of the sort intended for catechumens, whereas according to the mind of the Church and her liturgy it should be linked with the reception of the sacraments and so addressed to people who have already been converted and who live by the supernatural virtues.

The reason for these deficiencies is only too often a lack of doctrine.[4] Sound pastoral work presupposes a doctrine. Otherwise it is no more than a formula. On the other hand, doctrine which is not pastoral is mere armchair theology. There is no lack of theologians, thinkers, philosophers and men of action. Yet we often find in our reviews theoretical considerations and generalities which are not sufficiently in touch with real life. On the other hand, how many experiments in pastoral work are not nourished from the sources, because we have not given ourselves time to sit down and do some hard thinking either alone or in a team?

The lack of contact between theologians and the pastoral clergy is still too considerable for genuine pastoral experience to bring its light to bear on theology and spirituality. In theological circles there is too much thinking that misses the mark. Among parish priests there is insufficient doctrinal depth based on experience. In a period of dechristianization

[4] "Has theology kept pace with these changes or has Christian life gone several lengths ahead? Many people today are ready to give their lives for the Church and the world (but not at all for their own perfection). They need a theology which describes the Christian life from the point of view of service, of the mission, of sharing in the burning light and warmth with which the Church floods mankind. If we succeeded in thinking out such a theology clearly and in making it available for our people by including it in Christian teaching, then Christian communities would bring a new force to bear in the world" (Balthasar).

it is a serious thing to allow this sort of dissociation between the pastor and the doctor to become permanent. Our catechetical teaching bears the mark of this divorce within the Church.

It seems to me that in any given sector there should not be any cleavage between (1) historical research as the living memory of the Church, (2) a process of psychological and sociological conditioning in so far as such a conditioning is part of the data of real life, (3) basic action by militant Christians as an indispensable grasp of the movements of the Holy Spirit at the heart of the work of evangelization.

These researches in very different areas are now undertaken without any link between them. Church history ignores the active Christian. Religious sociology as we now know it ignores the psychology of different mental attitudes. The priest should stand at the crossroads where these different areas meet and he especially should discover the height, breadth and depth of a pastoral charity adequate to the needs of a technological civilization.

The most serious defect of all is the far too common failure to see what the layman has to contribute, whether it is a parish priest thinking about his way of teaching the catechism or of preaching, or a missionary sector trying to extend the coordination of its forces engaged in the apostolate. Catechetical instruction today ought to be not so much a progressive course of instruction on the plane of the absolute as a re-education in the life of faith. In a dechristianized environment it is not enough to catechize a child as an isolated individual, his whole environment has to be evangelized.

Are there any dechristianized areas where we can be sure that catechical instruction is at the service of evangelization? How are we to explain the fact that certain catechetical methods succeed in producing mere deists and not believers in the God of Revelation?

This underlines, as we intend that it should, the key problem of the "content" of our evangelization, the proclamation

of a message which is an urgent invitation to a faith which is also a conversion, and which takes into account the three chief elements in the modern mind: practical atheism, individualism and economic materialism. We have to reveal the supernatural, theological character of faith, the vital connection between our message and the life of the Church and the eschatological dimensions of our salvation.

In this encyclical *Divini Redemptoris*, Pius XI praised "the industry and the zeal of so many bishops and priests who are discovering and attempting (with all the necessary safeguards) new methods in the apostolate, methods more suited to modern demands".

CONCLUSION

A MISSIONARY CHURCH

At every period of her history the Church is called upon to adapt her evangelical work to the peoples to whom her mission takes her, and to the problems which they present. The Church as missionary is not the Christian people making an inventory of its troops and of the weapons it possesses, taking a census of the multitudes to be evangelized, recruiting its personnel and determining the tactics to be used for the reconquest of lost ground or the annexation of new territories. It is the Church re-examining her own nature, rediscovering what she truly is and extricating from the dross and dust of centuries the hard, pure diamond which Christ has charged her to keep shining before the eyes of men. It is the Church rediscovering in all its simplicity and in all its stark reality Christ's command: "You, therefore, must go out, making disciples of all nations, and baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

"A missionary Church"—it is in relation to this expression that, in this concluding chapter, we shall work out the missionary demands made upon the Church of our times. But it is important to distinguish the spiritual meaning of this missionary status from its historical context. And this meaning can only be grasped by Christians through faith in the mystery of the Church.

When we consider the Church's missionary endeavour, it appears that we have in the first place to distinguish two well-defined periods (of very unequal length be it noted), the

periods before and after the critical date, 313, that of the edict of Constantine.

The Church's presence in the Greco-Roman world in the apostolic age is evangelical in character and dominated by her desire to preach the Gospel to the whole world with no other support than an inexhaustible confidence in the Holy Spirit which drives her forward to the open sea.

The edict of Constantine inaugurates a system of official relations between the Church and governments. It is a factual recognition of the rights and the autonomy of the Church as a religious society. The Prince undertakes to maintain the Church and to keep order for her so that she may be freer in her work of evangelization. The Church organizes institutions which make it easier for her to manifest herself, provide a favourable climate for her growth and a juridical status for her "clerks". But there is a danger here; the Church may succumb to the temptations offered by the means to power pointed out to us in the second temptation of Jesus in the desert.

The Council of Nicaea in the reign of Constantine and the reform under Charlemagne were the products of the Church supported by the Prince. Today, the Orientals still live under a system of Church and State relations similar to that of Constantine. This *de facto* situation is not contrary to the Church's constitution, but, as things now are, seems out of date; and relations with the civil powers are difficult.

Christianity at its beginnings encountered the Mediterranean world which possessed a certain unity under the hegemony of the Roman Empire. In modern times, influenced by technology and the state of mind it induces, neo-paganism is an almost universal phenomenon and a unifying force.

The reaction of the pagan Roman Empire to Christian proselytism expressed itself in a long series of persecutions. Today, the opposition between the Church and the atheist world is still too recent for us to see what are the constants

in a *de facto* co-existence with its unpredictable repercussions for the apostolate.

Another historical factor, cultural and not political, is the fact that for centuries the Church has developed in the context of Western civilization which remains one of the elements in present-day evangelization. Not that we should exaggerate the influence of the West in the Church's development. The Orientals are equally conscious that they are developing what they have inherited from their early fathers and the first Councils. And the East may well find itself playing a great part in the fortunes of the Church in the time to come.

The West has given Christianity its language and its liturgy, its code of law and its philosophy, and it would doubtless be rash to abandon uncritically the humanism and institutions which Western culture has provided for the Church, for they are valid substructures for the transmission of the Christian message. What is regrettable is that the West, on the strength of its economic and military power, has considered itself a form of universal culture, and that the preaching of the Gospel has generally been done side by side with this culture's penetration. Instead of studying and respecting the ancient cultures with their glorious past and their undeniable human values, often complementary to what the West has to contribute, the messenger of the Gospel has too often been tempted to make a clean sweep of the ways of thought, feeling and expression which he has found in the new countries on whose shores he has disembarked, and to impose the intellectual habits of the West as on a par with the Word of Christ.

But today, the West as a whole is opposed and discredited by the other peoples and to an extent which we find it difficult to imagine. Arnold Toynbee[1] does not hesitate to call the West "the arch-aggressor of modern times". And the rejection of Western culture today involves the refusal of the religious message which has been too closely identified with it.

[1] A. J. Toynbee, *The World and the West* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1953).

However undeniable its influence during past centuries, the West, we repeat, has no right to claim that its civilization is universal. The ancient cultures which have flowered in other parts of our planet not only have a glorious past, but they still exercise a profound influence on the minds of men now in the full process of evolution. And so the civilization which is being fashioned today, with some possibility of becoming universal, is of a new kind, and no one previous tradition has the right to claim to be its author to the exclusion of the others.

The engineer and the technician found in such abundance throughout the world of industry are not typically Western. It is also becoming increasingly clear that the West will one day lose its leadership in the field of culture. Although countries which only yesterday were colonies are becoming Westernized by adopting the technology of the Western peoples, yet this technology is emptied of all reference to any religious values which these countries accept. They adapt themselves to the technology of the West by reacting against the West as such.

THE THIRD REVOLUTION

Thus after four and a half centuries of Western domination and just at the time when tables seem to have been all but completely turned after the Second World War, we are in a position to take a more accurate view of the present situation.

> Today, however, when the West's bid to win the world has been challenged by Russia, we can see that our Western civilization's apparent triumph on the technological plane is precarious for the very reason that has made it easy; and the reason is that this triumph has been superficial. The West has sent its technology racing round the world by the trick of freeing it from the handicap of being coupled with our Western Christianity; but, in the next chapter of the story, this unattached Western technology has been picked up by the Russians and been coupled with Communism, and this new

> and potent combination of a Western technology with a Western heresy is now being offered to the Far Eastern peoples and to the rest of mankind as a rival way of life to ours (A. J. Toynbee, *op. cit.*, p. 61).

Whatever may be the political importance of China and Russia in the near future, the great event of the century will no doubt be the advancement of the peoples who are now in a state of development, whether like negro Africa they have just acquired their own independence with all the disadvantages of a lack of experience, or whether they have succeeded in acquiring the economic means needed to bring under cultivation their immense territories with their undeveloped resources. South America is a good example of the latter.

Our European nations were the first promoters and witnesses of this development among the underequipped peoples at the same time as a world-wide proletariat was coming into existence strong in the knowledge of shared suffering and with the same passion for justice and liberation. We did not at first realize how international this new brotherhood of the workers of all countries was to be. A new mother country has come into existence. The men who work together in the same factory, Poles, North Africans or Congolese by birth, are brothers in arms bound together by a common destiny and striving for a better future. These companions in poverty own nothing and all they have to defend is their freedom as workers. They make their claims, they strike in the same spirit as their elders who, but a short time ago, went to their deaths in the front line in defence of their country against the invader. For them capitalism is the oppressor and they look upon its representatives in the same way as Frenchmen did the Nazi occupying troops.

There is the immense demographic advance of the Asiatic peoples, the search for "black gold", confederations of tribes which only yesterday were separated by the barriers of language, rivalry and white exploitation. There is famine,

illiteracy, leprosy, and these are world-wide scourges. There is an atlas of destitution from Tokyo to Calcutta, from Rio de Janeiro to Mexico, but there is also a hope of deliverance in the heart of this immense world of the poor. The same urge which has brought them from their primitive conditions to the stage at which they realize that they are men tricked out of their rights, has led these masses (informed as they now are through the widespread use of visual and aural means of communication) to share the same desire to emerge together from their present state.

The third revolution taking place under our very eyes, after the French Revolution and the working-class revolution of Marx and Engels, is that of the poor, of the "third", oppressed world living in subhuman conditions, the revolution of the peoples of those continents which only yesterday were under colonial domination. And it is a revolution which is quite different from its predecessors. Yet its evolution is linked with them although we cannot foresee in what direction its influence will be brought to bear. But the historical context in which it is taking place is obvious for us to see and it involves the whole missionary effort of the Church.

This awakening is brought about because of the profound division between poor and rich nations, and it is much to the point in our argument to note that the rich nations are those which are called Christian. Much more, the West, in which Christianity has been incarnated in history, has been revealed to the underdeveloped countries as primarily responsible for injustice as it is found throughout the world. Even today, from the depths of its own comfort and security, it seems to look with blind eyes at the poverty of others.

Aid for the underdeveloped countries has become official as a result of competitive policies. It has not, on the whole, become a genuine human movement. Christians at least are to be found in the international organizations which are doing their best to better living conditions in these vast areas. But it is the entire Church which is called to become missionary

in the presence of those spiritual forms of distress which remain the most iniquitous examples of injustice.

Such then are the outlines of the Church's mission as she faces the civilizations and the poor who but yesterday were called uncivilized. Christianity is no longer synonymous with Christian civilization,[2] any more than it is the religion of the West. The Church refuses to allow herself to be confined to any particular civilization.[3] It is nevertheless true that her universal mission is made more difficult by the complexity of current cultural evolution and by the Western foundations of Christian culture.

THE STRUGGLE IN THE CHURCH

It is essential for us today to realize that the Constantinian era has passed away not only, as we have seen, as a historical reality, but in its specifically religious sense.

> The relations of Christianity with a world which has nothing Constantinian about it must be thought out again and very thoroughly.... We are moving away from the European Continent to the whole planet with its rapid increase in population, its vastly different civilizations and its mass of completely unexpected forms of human behaviour. It is the whole geographical and cultural basis of Christianity which has changed.
>
> The Christian with a "Constantinian" type of mind tends to take up arms against this situation. He sees the defects of this new world and he is right. They exist. But he makes them his excuse for his refusal to sympathize with the aspirations of the century in which he lives.... The "evangelical" Christian is anxious to enter into a dialogue with men of the new type (Fr Chenu, *I.C.I.*, January 1st, 1960).

[2] "A Christian civilization is not one in which the party in power serves the temporal interests of the Church, it is a civilization which aims to treat all men with respect, it is a human civilization, and the characteristic notes of a civilization, whether or not it is Christian, are justice and freedom" (François Mauriac).

[3] "The Catholic Church does not identify herself with any culture, but she is ready to ally herself with them all" (Pius XII, Letter to the Bishop of Augsburg, 1955).

The Church in fact meets external opposition from a world which is solidly non-Christian, and internal opposition due to a kind of tension between the defenders of the *status quo* and missionaries who are asking for freedom to experiment in their attempts to bring Jesus Christ to a new world.

This twofold opposition has a meaning which goes far beyond our inertia or our impatience and can only be grasped by faith.

> If this opposition is not seen in the light of its religious significance, it runs the risk of appearing merely a sociological reality. How often we heard it said, at the time of Rome's decisions in 1954 and 1959, that they were due to the forces of inertia in a Church which was involved to the point of danger, both in her leaders and her members, with a world that had passed away for ever! But this kind of reaction has something very unhealthy about it. It reduces the mystery of the Church to a mere sociological system conditioned in the same way as any other human institution (Jean Frisque).

The Church is not a colonial expedition. The meeting between Jesus and a man's conscience takes place in the very depths of the human heart. The Church must be the meeting-place of Jesus Christ with a whole section of the human race, and it is with this purpose that she must go forward among the nations. But the man she sends will have to "invent" his own way of being present in and to a non-Christian world. He will be bound by total loyalty to Jesus Christ and will belong both to the world he is to evangelize and to the Church as she is in the concrete. This is not an easy situation to be in when he has to hand on a message which is linked with cultural implications foreign to this new world. And it is under these circumstances that opposition may come from the Church herself.

> At first the missionary just does not understand. It is humanly impossible for him to understand. He has given his life to the mission he has received. He has obeyed. He has

certainly invented methods of his own, but is this not, by definition, what the Church expects from her missionaries? And now the Church, using the voice of her hierarchical leaders, a voice that is almost always supported by the queries of a multitude of Christians, calls in question what he has done and this by reminding him that traditionally priest and layman do not live out the implications of their priesthood and baptism in the same way. But why is he blamed since the Church must have known beforehand that he would have to invent methods of his own? In any case, what does the Church know about it? She isn't "in it up to the neck" as he is! Let her come and see for herself! And the missionary is tempted to tell himself that the Church does not understand because she is bound up with, involved in a world that has passed away. Some will even perhaps say that the Church is betraying Jesus Christ, that, if Christ were really alive in her, she would not react in this way since the issue at stake is the preaching of the Gospel to the poor! Humanly speaking the missionary cannot understand because, at this level, he is right (Jean Frisque).

The situation described here is certainly an extreme one yet it gives us a profound insight into the mystery of the Church. The Church does not know in advance what new form she must give to the preaching of Jesus Christ which is a mission entrusted to her alone. But, and this is the one single purpose she has in mind, what she has to invent, although new, is what has always been the mainstay of her life. This is the meaning of her tradition. The missionary is not the whole Church. This is obvious and yet it is, over and beyond him, with the Church that the non-Christian world enters into a dialogue. Although the Church may oppose him, the missionary is nonetheless a man with a mission in the Church. She opposes him, yes, but far more than this, she expects great things of him. She expects him to re-examine the whole project on which he has set his heart, and this within the context of his increasing obedience to Christ, that he may be shaped anew by him according to "the measure"

of Christ, the measure of his plan of salvation which he has implemented once and for all.

In the presence of such demands as this we cannot help thinking of Fr Lebbe founding the Church in China, of the priest workers on their proletarian mission. And the reality is always more complex than a hasty reflection on experiences such as theirs. As Jean Frisque adds:

> It is the duty of those in authority in the Church to learn in a sense from those whom they oppose.
>
> When any man in authority in the Church does not feel that he is personally concerned in the opposition to the mission, he makes it impossible for him to understand that the missionary, although he has been obedient, has not merely "toed the line". The fact is that, although he has consented to go down into the depths of the "night" which has been forced upon him, the missionary cannot help beginning to worry the Church all over again, to ask her questions, and often the same questions.[4]

This helps us to gain a better understanding of the meaning of the Declaration of the French Cardinals and Archbishops (April 1960) when it alludes to the need for all the baptized to become mission-minded.

[4] "At the beginning of this century Fr Lebbe, then vicar general at Tientsin, had done a remarkable work. One day his superiors ordered him to leave Tientsin at once and to go to Southern China. He did not know the language and he had good reason to think that the immediate purpose behind his superiors' decision was political rather than religious. Without even seeing his best friend again, he left immediately. Six months later during a retreat, he wrote to his new bishop and knelt to do it. The letter was a very long document and in it he put the same questions as before concerning a native episcopate and the patriotism of Chinese Catholics. This document is probably one of the most important in the history of the missions. Those who had expected him to "toe the line" went so far as to say that he had refused to obey. But at Rome he was told that the first Chinese bishops owed their consecration to his act of obedience. We should not forget that Fr Lebbe knew St Paul by heart and that all his life he was anxious to be connected with every attempt at revival in the Church of his times" (*La Revue Nouvelle*, 15 Feb. 1961).

THE LIVING ORGANISMS OF THE CHURCH: PRIESTS AND LAITY

"The complete evangelist", wrote Cardinal Suhard, "is not just the baptized Christian, nor the priest by himself, it is the Christian community. The basic cell, the unit of measurement in the apostolate, is a kind of organic composite, the inseparable pair—priest and laity."

If the Church's mission remains fundamentally the same today as yesterday, the mission of salvation in Jesus Christ, the Christian must try to find a new way to present salvation to a new and unbelieving world. There can be no doubt about this. As we face a human race shaken to its foundations, only the laity collaborating with the priesthood (each through the grace of his state) can provide a complete answer to the demand for a Christian presence of an entirely new kind in the world. Priests and laymen must think out together the problem of the place of the priest and the layman who wish to remain in close touch as the situation of a missionary Church develops. Pius XII in an address to the laymen assembled for the Second World Congress said: "The laity therefore, and especially the laity, must realize that they are the Church."

At the beginning of a new world age the Church owes it to herself to produce a laity in full employment. The first two World Congresses of the Laity held in Rome (1954, 1957) were an event in the life of the Church. They showed that Pius XII, by calling these assemblies together, wished to sanction and consecrate the emergence of the lay movement which is developing in the majority of countries. But this was only a beginning. Laymen are far from enjoying the position in the Church which Pius XI looked forward to when in 1929 he took under his own protection the work of Fr Cardijn and his first Belgian Jocistes. If laymen are generally coming to be respected as laymen and as members in their own right of a missionary community, it is still a fact that the lay

movement as such is not recognized except in the official organizational pattern of the Church. It is certainly not so recognized by churchmen with a certain attitude of mind and code of conduct, in spite of the teaching of the popes and the directives of the bishops.

Our generation needs to be freed from all forms of clericalism. The habit of using laymen for parish purposes only, the attitude of omnipotence adopted by some clerics, the long tradition of a real separation between clerics and lay people, these are considerable handicaps. And there are others. If the layman is to be really present as a Christian in the life of the civil community, the priest must be present in the life of the layman and as a priest. Lay people are not to be servants of the priest nor are priests to be servants of the layman. Both priests and lay people are to be servants of the Church.

The Western Church has been a clerical institution for a long period of time. Her liturgy since the Middle Ages has been a liturgy for clerics. This has tended to make the chants and the rites more complicated, whereas the theology and liturgy of the East bear traces of a greater contribution on the part of the laity. On the other hand, it is in the West that the revival of the lay vocation is more directly apostolic in inspiration.

Though the ties between them have in fact been loosened in the past, priests and lay people are now rediscovering the profound relationships and the mutual interdependence involved in one and the same mission. This they are doing in the midst of a crisis which is all the more painful since it is the expression of one and the same consciousness of what the Church is.

In our times, the emergence of the lay movement has taken three forms somewhat different in origin, but which tend to coalesce in what will be the pattern of a missionary lay movement in the future.

Catholic Action, in the conditions of daily life and under

mandate from the hierarchy, has developed considerably over the past thirty years and has conducted a progressive experiment in the sphere of its own objectives which are regrouping, spiritual vitality and evangelization. Its range of influence in the Church is much more extensive than the field of action of its members. It has an apostolic spirit which co-operates with the missionary effort in our parishes and, if it is to be completely effective, it needs a common front between the work of evangelization and a combined pastoral method.

The foreign missions already have a long experience of lay participation in the work of priests. They have what are called "mission catechists". These laymen are given the responsibility for teaching future candidates for baptism, initiating them into the Church's rites and community prayer, and taking the place of the missionaries in distant mission posts. They have also family and civic obligations in their neighbourhood. They have done yeoman service for the Church. Pius XII used to say: "One missionary with six catechists to help him does more work than seven missionaries." It is no doubt true that these catechists will be called upon to develop their work in new ways in view of the new conditions in which the missionaries in these areas have to continue their preaching of the Gospel, but they still offer a valuable example of a much-needed collaboration between priests and lay people.

Finally, the name "lay missionary" has been given to those men and women and young people who have gone out to work as apostles and to help developing countries in their evolution towards complete control of their own affairs. In his directives to the members of the World Congresses of the Laity, Pius XII defined their task in the service of overseas missions as follows: "Doctors, engineers, manual workers in various trades are anxious to support the priests' work in the missions by their example, their professional activity and above all by spiritual training for their missionary work. But the lay missionary movement is still only at the beginning of its development."

A NEW WORLD NEEDS A NEW MISSION

What forms will the development of a specially trained laity take in the future, called as it is to play an outstanding missionary rôle in a situation without precedent in history? It is not too rash to think that this lay missionary movement, whose outlines are so difficult to define today, may be related in a certain sense to the above three types of laymen which have become established in the Church today.

There are whole nations, particularly those under Marxist government, whose priest missionaries are no longer openly welcome as such. They are no longer admitted, they cannot preach the Gospel openly or lay the foundations of a local Church. And an unequivocal veto is placed on the missionary's influence by those classes which are the most advanced from the cultural point of view. The suspicion with which the foreign envoy of the Church was formerly treated now weighs upon the native clergy.

In Islam, what was previously a religious defensive reaction in face of Christianity, considered as a false religion, is today a political attitude arising from suspicious nationalism or, though more rarely, from ethnic, racial or ideological prejudices. The Church may well be obliged to find a new status for those she sends, priests or lay people, to lay the foundation of a local Church.[5] Lay people will in any case be involved in the organization of this new world and will surely be on the spot as the first missionaries in certain cultural areas to which the Church is forbidden access. And priests will undoubtedly be obliged to become members of the working-

[5] Whether he is a priest or a layman, the baptized Christian is commissioned by the hierarchy to do the Church's work in a non-Christian environment. This delegated duty is still in force even if a man has to be prepared to wait for a long period before he can preach the Gospel. What then will be the nature of this duty delegated by the bishop in the very different cases of a mandate for Catholic Action and the jurisdiction of the missionary priest? This is a question which will have to be asked in relation to an increasing number of non-Christian environments.

class population. They will have to ply a trade, they will have to establish themselves as men who are of service to the country. And they will continue to have a mission on behalf of the Church which no one else can fulfil.[6]

In the future as today, the establishment of the Church will depend on the presence of both priests and laymen in an entirely new missionary situation. There are situations which have an almost prophetic character in the sense that they foreshadow, at the level of some local experiment, a state of affairs which will soon become general. Thus we may well believe that the experiment made by some of the priest workers in France will play a determining rôle in providing the theologians with food for reflection, will point the way to those who are seeking a pastoral action that will be missionary, and will lead to forms of priestly life of which perhaps we today have no idea.

Similarly, active Christian workers in a non-Christian environment give us some sense of the uncomfortable position of Christians in all missionary countries. At this level, the incomprehension they encounter, the opposition they provoke, the crises they undergo in the field of their own consciences, are typical of that "sign to be contradicted" which every Christian ought to be if he is to remain strictly loyal to the Gospel.

[6] The new conditions in which the Gospel has to be preached are partly responsible for the fall in the number of vocations to the priesthood and the religious life in the case of those who are acutely aware of the missionary situation. Whereas their elders who are priests note that certain outward forms connected with the ecclesiastical state, such as clerical costume and certain customs, which they are obliged to adopt, are sometimes an added obstacle for a forward-looking mission in the pagan world, young men are asking themselves whether they will really be answering our Lord's call by offering themselves for ordination. The fact that young men are turning away from the priesthood and the religious life, although they have done good apostolic work in the ranks of Catholic Action, is not unconnected with the fact that many laymen have the impression that there has been a slowing down in the missionary movement. A priesthood in full apostolic employment is the best means of providing numerous and genuinely missionary vocations for the Church in the near future.

It is no longer the dialogue between the Church and the working class which is difficult, but the dialogue between the Church and the modern world. How can any Christian fail to feel uncomfortable when his faith is contradicted by the way the majority of men lead their lives? We need only point out in this connection the highly significant struggle which workers who are members of Catholic Action have to endure.

TOWARDS A PRIESTHOOD WHICH CAN FACE THE CHALLENGE OF OUR TIME

"The whole of the priestly life, and not only the civilization of the world of work, has to be rethought." This statement of Cardinal Suhard's emphasizes the immense scope of the crisis which affects the priesthood everywhere. But this crisis must be seen as one of growth for the priesthood in our day.

Make no mistake about the facts. Although there is a genuine apostolic revival, a whole generation of priests has paid the price for this religious awakening. These priests are only too tragically aware that they are rejected by a pagan world. They have made superb efforts, they are fully conscious of their own powerlessness, they are victorious even in their failure because they are opening the way for their successors. Yet they are passing through a period of complete darkness, obsessed as they must be with the apostolate of those outside the Church and yet bound by a Church organization which they see is not adapted to the needs of the times.[7] They are convinced of the truth of Cardinal Montini's words:

"It is the priest's duty to go to the people, not the people's

[7] As long ago as 1949 Cardinal Suhard said: "The sorrow and anguish of priests today is that they feel that the real world is living and shaping itself apart from them and that they are strangers in it. When they examine their own lives they realize that their ministry is essentially concerned with the faithful, but today the lost sheep far outnumber the faithful and the priest must seek those who are lost. But in actual fact the sheep who have remained in the fold take up the greater part of his time."

duty to go to the priest. It is his duty to become a missionary once again if he wants Christianity to survive and to become once more a living leaven in our civilization."

A world he does not understand crushes a man. Some priests carry in their own flesh the wounds caused by this division between the Church and the working classes. Some of them are sick men and all of them suffer inwardly in silence. If certain among them have been so overwhelmed that they seem to have denied their priesthood, if they have been more generous than prudent, if they have preserved a mistaken loyalty to those among whom they preached the Gospel, is this not one more proof of the tragic failure of the Christian priesthood to adapt itself to the needs of the technological age which has now begun?

On the other hand, priests of the more traditional type in so-called Christian areas sometimes enjoy a false sense of security which is equally significant from our point of view. These priests appear to have adapted themselves to the needs of the time because of the survival of certain Christian practices and an artificial parochial set-up. They owe more to the connivance of a sociological environment than to the genuine priestly spirit.

In areas which are Christian from the sociological standpoint, the priest is respected and plays the part of a person of distinction although his activities are not necessarily priestly. His presence may well be in the nature of what Pascal in his time called "diversion". Some priests have invented substitute tasks for themselves, on the strength of their educational resources or natural gifts to be used in a good cause. And they even come to a state in which they no longer see the absurdity of an unemployed priest. Men of strong character have a large number of alibis at their disposal but others less gifted sometimes see things more clearly and are more discouraged.

There are priests teaching in schools who give to God only the minimum of time so that their professional duties as

teachers of physics, for example, may be the better safeguarded. Eventually they find they cannot even hear confessions conscientiously as a priest should. There are country priests who delight in reading the Fathers of the Church and would look down their noses at others (no more "out of touch" than themselves) who keep bees. There are others whose form of illusion is their parish drama group, music, stamp collecting, or other equally artificial substitutes for their real job. Yet neither their persons nor the priesthood seem in danger. In the towns, they go to meeting after meeting, they organize summer camps, evening lectures, courses in a Catholic institute. Activities like these are just as likely to mask a failure to adapt one's priestly vocation to the needs of the times. Old-fashioned political views, antiquated reading matter, a vocabulary that only a priest can understand while the people around him speak a language which is quite foreign to him, all these externals indicating a good, punctilious priest with a regard for tradition, do not of course prove that he is struggling against a bad conscience, but how often these attitudes may be covering (though not necessarily so) a false sense of security! We may laugh at them but they ought in most cases to make us uneasy.

Is it necessary to insist that the first condition for complete effectiveness in the order of faith (whatever changes the times impose upon us) is for the priest in the first place to have full confidence in his priesthood, a fundamental optimism issuing from the theological virtue of hope and transcending both success and failure. The priests who are most keenly aware of the extent of the process of dechristianization in our times are not necessarily those who are most discouraged. This confidence in the priesthood is also an act of faith in the work Christ does in the hearts of those who are evangelized. "We saw Love and we believed." Only Love recognizes Love.

Once this has been said, it remains true that the Church wishes to do everything possible to see that our priesthood

possesses both a human and a spiritual balance which will give promise of fruitful work. The following extract from Pius XII's Constitution *Sedes Sapientiae* (§ 314) shows the Church's mind on this question:

> Everything must be brought into action that may be useful for the formation of a complete type of man, so that both the religious and the priestly formation given may rest on the solid foundation of natural integrity and a human culture. For men will find a more certain and easier path to Christ if, in the person of the priest, the kindness and love of our Lord for men appear more clearly.

These words say all that needs to be said from the point of view we should adopt today when we wish to suggest how priests should adapt or readapt themselves to the times: we must form complete men on the foundation of natural integrity and a human culture, as we contemplate the mystery of the priest's personality at the service, in the Church, of Christ's love among men.

Our times demand priests who are fully men and men who have become fully priests, priests who are alive in the full sense of the word, who learn from the school of life and the voice of the Spirit. We must bring everything into action, as Pius XII told us to, in order to form a complete type of man, which implies that we must avoid, in our ecclesiastical institutions such as seminaries and scholasticates, everything which mass-produces men ill-adapted to the needs of the times. We have to admit that this "humanity" is often mishandled in our priests. In our opinion this is one of the causes of the crises affecting the priest today. When a man is ordained priest his priestly function, which ought to be one of his characteristics as a man, becomes a substitute for his manhood.

The priest does not escape from the disease of our civilization, whose symptoms are the haste with which we go about our business, overwork, lack of relaxation and nervous

tension. None of us can be dispensed from the duty of adult maturity and the man who is a priest must work out a balance between his fundamental human characteristics and his function in the Church. In the past, an *ecclesiastical status* was evolved; it implied a certain way of life and a good deal of confusion regarding the meaning of that separation from the world to which both priest and baptized Christian are bound. Today the increasingly effective presence of a genuine laity reveals the true nature of the priest's proper function in the Church.

An authentic collaboration between priest and layman not only leads to a really effective apostolate but also to a balanced and integrated personality in the priest. It is through repeated, judicious and mutual contacts between priest and layman that the former achieves his own unity in a total personal commitment involving genuine responsibilities and a dynamic forward movement which are involved in his vocation as such.

Priests of this kind, mixing gladly with other people, believers and unbelievers, sharing their interests, in touch with the life of the district and well informed on events in the world at large, are no longer persons of distinction and respected as such. They no longer cut a figure in society, they have acquired quite a different attitude of mind. They know how to listen, to become informed, to accept facts and suggestions. They willingly undertake team work and join in a combined pastoral effort which seems to them the only apostolic method that can cope with the complexity of the real situation.

There are Christians who are scandalized at these external changes in the way of life of the parish clergy and at the new view they take of their ministry. There may be a certain immaturity among some of these priests but, in spite of this, the real point at issue is a profound change of attitude which requires a spirituality appropriate to the Christian priesthood

in our own times, and which is a sign that priests are adapting themselves to the needs of our modern world.[8]

A COLLEGIATE EPISCOPATE

It is true not only that there is now a crisis of growth in the priesthood and a slow coming to birth of a lay movement in the Christian community, but also that a missionary Church is bringing more vividly to light than was recently the case the outstanding part played by the man who is the keystone of the whole diocesan edifice, the bishop, the successor of the apostles. It may well prove that, for the Church as a whole, this return to the sources, this rediscovery by the faithful of the irreplaceable mission of the episcopate in the growth of the Body of Christ, is a major enrichment of capital importance.

The size of dioceses, the large number of parishes and the work our bishops have to do prevent them from having more contact than they do with their priests and their people. Yet, at a time when the fullness of the bishops' priesthood has been brought to light by studies on the subject, a combined pastoral effort has also made clearer the place of the hierarchy in the structure of the diocese. It is the bishop alone

[8] The exterior signs of a man's consecration to the Church's work have varied a great deal in the course of history. There is a passage in a letter written by Pope Celestine I in the fifth century and in which he takes the clergy of Gaul to task for devising a special costume for themselves. He wrote: "It is not customary for us priests to distinguish ourselves from the Christian people in this way. We should be distinguished by our profession and our teaching of the Faith; not by our clothes but by our upright conduct, not by paying attention to external matters, but by purity of spirit." And more recently, Robert Delavignette in *Birama* has analysed the meaning in our time of such exterior marks of separation and distinction as clothes. "We are caught up in the craze for speed and we need to see amid the clatter of our lives and our roads, the clerical costume of the past with its slower rhythms. The clergy, so we expect, will link us to the centuries that have gone ... and so we want to keep the Church just as she was in the past so that she may be a place of escape to which we may scurry back without any fear that she will have changed."

who puts life into the mission and gives each sector of it its proper place in the Church's life.

Further, the colossal upheavals in the African, Asiatic and South American territories have produced a new awareness of the common responsibility of the apostolic college in union with the pope. Our eyes have turned instinctively to that unique missionary bishop, St Paul, as he faced the Greco-Roman world. After him is the line of the great bishop founders of Churches; Irenaeus, Remi, Boniface and others who brought the Gospel to the people entrusted to their care. And the moment has now come to return to this great apostolic tradition.

> For the bishops (on whom responsibility falls in the first place) to be able to face the immense task ahead, it is not primarily a question of numbers, but of unanimity, of strengthening the links of the apostolic college to which our Lord entrusted the care of the flock. It is Christ's will that they should gather together in this way the better to face up to their mission.
>
> The Christian people is well aware of this and it is delighted to see its bishops meeting in assemblies, commissions and at the Ecumenical Council. God is about to reveal to us one of his great plans for the salvation of the world. As in the recent past, the meaning of the priesthood has become clear to us, as today we are learning the meaning of the lay state, so tomorrow, and the process has already begun, we shall see the meaning of the episcopate in all its grandeur (E. Keller).

TOWARDS THE MISSION: THE PRELIMINARIES

We do not yet know what sort of human being the "technological man", whose advent seems so close, will be, any more than we are aware of the sort of Christian who will come forward in the years that lie ahead. There is no point in hiding the fact that we are bewildered by so many upheavals. We are shaken out of our habits and our tendency to cling to the status quo for we are aware that apostolic work is clamouring to be done. But we have not yet an overall view

of the tasks to be carried out nor sufficient knowledge of the people to be evangelized.

What we need are "prophets of our times" (and we are instinctively aware of this) to shake us out of our torpor, to revive our hope, to give new life to our zeal. A few Christian laymen have given us some idea of this prophetic rôle in various departments of literature (Péguy and Bernanos), philosophy (Maritain, Gilson), and social and political thought (Mounier).

And if we look carefully we shall also see that there are priests whose personality is that of "mystics of our times", and who are destined by Providence to mark out our line of approach to a pagan or atheist environment. They are men with an acute sense of reality, with authentic Catholic institutions, and their lives in the first place, then their writings, reveal that their response is the fruit of the Spirit at the heart of a mystical experience whose roots are deep in the world of faith.

There are two of these men whose fundamental kinship is hidden beneath the differences between their spiritual journeys as well as their temperaments. They are the living and providential answer on the one hand to the problem raised by the fact of science, and on the other to the problem raised in the age of the poor.

They were missionaries among both the humble and the learned in the same new world. Their names are Teilhard de Chardin and Charles de Foucauld. They were both seekers and explorers in mission fields, both were called to be forerunners and to give the same answer to the most agonizing of our questions as we face those environments which are most divided from the Church in her Greco-Roman form.[9]

[9] We mention these two missionaries but we do not claim that they were theologians of the mission or even theologians at all. And we have no intention of joining in the heated discussion to which Teilhard's work still gives rise. Whatever reservations are made by some concerning the interpretation put by uninformed readers on a religious thought which did not claim to be definitive, it is Teilhard's presence in the scientific world which interests us here, and the light it throws on the line of approach towards the mission.

"My Gospel and my mission is to take Christ to the heart of a realm of reality which is considered to present the greatest dangers, to be the most naturalistic and the most pagan." Fr Teilhard formulated his missionary ideal in these words round about the year 1920. And he added, as he foresaw the urgent need for the Church to engage in a universal task of evangelization: "We must make our choice at once, for the earth is cracking under our feet. The issue at stake is the survival of an increasing number of Christians."

Christianity must be made incarnate and we remember that this is what the priest workers attempted to do. Fr Teilhard puts this need into words which remind us of those used by Pius XI when he sent the J.O.C. out on its mission: "If he is to act effectively in any sphere of life, he must himself belong to that sphere. Only a workman will be listened to by working men. Only the geologist or the soldier can speak to geologists and soldiers. Only a man can make men listen to him." In 1954, he defined his thought still more clearly: "There are increasingly large (and among the most progressive) sectors of the human race which have slipped from the grasp of Christianity because its own humanity has grown cold."[10]

As everyone knows, the work and the essential message of Fr de Foucauld are summed up in the words: "We must proclaim the Gospel by our lives.... We must be a living Gospel." Obviously, in these two men, we are facing a new type of apostle and also a new type of mission. And to this mission we must now turn our attention.

A NEW TYPE OF APOSTLE: "THE PREMISSIONARY"

These intuitions which were the staple of the lives of these two incomparable missionaries confirm our own views on

[10] "It is the fundamental virtues of charity and humility which are lacking or which have become weak" (Fr de Foucauld).

the mission, but these few quotations do not cast sufficient light on the need for an apostolate today among those who are furthest from the Church either because they have not advanced in the religious life or are hostile to it. Fr Peyriguère, a disciple of Fr de Foucauld, will help us at this point. He described this line of approach to the mission as a "premission".[11] It is as a disciple of Fr de Foucauld that Fr de Peyriguère answers the genuine questions raised by the mission in our times. And his answer, both his own and Fr de Foucauld's, was that, in the first place, a life has to be led, in keeping with one of his own favourite sayings: "we must be and do before we talk." "In certain cases", he says elsewhere, "the mission meets such obstacles that it has to proceed by a division of labour. The premissionary work has to be allotted its own methods and its own specialists. Fr de Foucauld sets this premissionary work in relief, brings it to the light of day, isolates it from the whole and gives it a complete structure of its own. He defines its nature and conditions."

"It is not exterior activity which gives a vocation its character, it is the mystique by which it is inspired." By this mystique is meant an "invisible, mysterious and efficacious action". It is nourished by the Eucharist and at the same time sustains itself supernaturally in tasks of very varied kinds, as the days pass, each with its load of work.

The premission can only be an outward expression of an authentic faith, a preliminary operation issuing from the gift of oneself to God and to men. What then does this premission mean?

[11] The word "premission" as used by Fr de Foucauld and explained by Fr Peyriguère—as we shall see in the following pages—has a very precise meaning. It is a method which brings Christ into an environment through our presence, our prayer and our offering of ourselves. It is, therefore, decidedly not the same thing as the refusal to undertake evangelization on the grounds that the temporal order must be reformed before the Gospel can be preached.

Fr Peyriguère defines what he calls "the lines of force of premissionary work" as follows:

> 1. Since any direct apostolate is impossible among the masses, since we cannot preach Christ openly, what can we do? What is our function as members of the Church?
> 2. What does our Lord think of these men who refuse to accept the Church of Christ? What do they mean to him? Are they completely foreign to him?

And he gives these answers:

> Christ becomes present in the presence of the premissionary. And since he becomes present through him, he reveals himself. He may not give his name but he is there, going about among men who do not know him. The premissionary wants "to proclaim the Gospel through his life". Christ, through and in this premissionary, stands out in *all the fullness of his moral greatness.* We do not wish to minimize the achievements of non-Christian religions nor to deny the noble characteristics they imprint on human souls. It is nevertheless true that Christ in all his fullness *now stands on their horizon.* In a word, he is different. How can he not draw men's eyes towards himself? This unknown God may very soon become a God who is respected, perhaps a God who is secretly loved.

And after pointing to this moral greatness of Christ shining through the premissionary, he goes on to indicate another way in which Christ reveals himself. "Through and in the premissionary, Christ shows himself in *all the radiance of his loving kindness.*" This loving kindness is shown first of all towards those who are his brothers in Christ and whom he looks on as such. And they instinctively realize that they are loved as brothers. It is through this loving kindness of Christ made visible that the premissionary most often finds his way to the hearts of those who have resisted the light of Christ's moral greatness. Fr Peyriguère concludes:

> Is it enough to say that through the premissionary, Christ reveals himself? Because of him, Christ and men's souls are not just to look at one another.... There is an invisible mission

of Christ.... The premissionary places himself in Christ's hands so that by becoming a member of a given people, race or civilization, Christ may ask in and through him for the salvation of his brothers....

Christ is always drawing the premissionary deeper and further towards a more complete and more intimate cooperation in his own mission as the world's Saviour.... The premissionary, grafted onto a people, a race, a civilization, places himself in Christ's hands so that in and through him Christ may complete his own sufferings. He multiplies his entreaties, prayers and intercession for the salvation of those he has adopted and who have become his.

To the second question raised by the premission (what does Christ think of those men who refuse to accept him?) Fr Peyriguère answers by stating what he calls "the three doctrinal presuppositions underlying premissionary work":

1. *The bodily relationship* of non-Christians to Christ through the fact of the Incarnation. A small section of the human race is Christian but the whole race can be "Christic".

2. The *pre-Christianity* which constitutes the moral and spiritual heritage of non-Christians and is derived from their own or other religious sources.

3. *Christ the mystical Redeemer* has also his hidden life. Grace therefore acts beyond the sphere of visible membership of the Church.

These three fundamental presuppositions are the point of emergence of the problems of the premission and are the foundation of what we venture once more to call "the christic greatness of non-Christians".

"No man is born separated from Christ," said St Jerome. We know that the Son of God made man is "a blood relation" of all men. Before his birth men lived in the expectation of Christ, they looked to his coming, even if they did not realize it. Today men are still waiting for Christ (how can they believe in him if they have never heard of him? see Rom. 10. 14). True, this waiting is not to be compared with that of the period before Christ. Christ has come, but he has not

yet been made manifest to all men, although all of them, as Fr Peyriguère says, live "under the influence of Christ".[12]

Who among us has not found these "pre-Christian" virtues in the hearts of people who to all appearances are further away than any from Christ? In ardent peace movements, in a spirit of courageous solidarity, in persistent research, in hidden self-sacrifice.... Who can say by what paths men grope their way, paths which we know are the work of grace?

But it is not enough merely to know this. The demands of the law of incarnation remain. "Christ became a hundred per cent man. Foucauld made himself a hundred per cent Touareg, Peyriguère a hundred per cent Berber. Teilhard a hundred per cent scientist. This meant a complete commitment. This meant the renunciation of the privileges attached to an interested, partial or merely apparent commitment" (Fr Cornélis).

We can only exercise this premission through which Christ becomes present to men if we, each of us in his own situation, genuinely live the life of Christ in us on behalf of others.

With such immense vistas ahead, prayer is already the mission begun. "It is from among them, standing before my Master as one of them that, during the night, I offer to the Trinity what I call the prayer of the Berbers." For Fr Peyriguère this act of bringing others into his prayer did not merely mean praying for their intentions, but praying "as the representative of those who do not believe, do not pray", just as an iron lung functions as a replacement for the paralysed

[12] "In the nineteenth century it would seem that the missions showed an immense generosity all to no purpose. Time and money were spent without stint, the sick were cared for and the hungry fed. ... In return, the missions reaped more often than not only rancour and contempt. What de Foucauld intuitively saw was that, if we were to avoid paternalism, we had to become brethren of the poor, to be poor with the poor, to have nothing to give them and to be content to live very simply with them so that they might discover in all its purity the only wealth we really possess, the friendship of Jesus" (Fr Voillaume).

and diseased natural lung. It is lending to others a mind which has faith, it is lending one's heart and voice. "A priest was asked by an unbeliever standing next to him in the corridor of a train: 'What are you thinking about?' The priest answered: 'I am saying your prayers'."

To pray to Jesus, to pray with Jesus (in the Eucharist) not only *for* others but *in their stead*, this is the prayer of the premissionary. It is suggested in John (15. 5 and 7): "if a man lives on in me, and I in him, then he will yield abundant fruit. . . . As long as you live on in me, and my words live on in you, you will be able to make what request you will, and have it granted."

This then is the premissionary work of the Church. An enthusiast though he was for his mission, Fr Peyriguère has put us on our guard against childish illusions in our mission work, whatever their source: "Take care that, in the service of the Church, you do not become one more apostle talking about Christ. How many are there who give Christ to men without saying a word about him? How many who, since they speak about him without living by his life, do not give him? Christ is overburdened with apostles who talk. He hungers and thirsts for apostles who live his life!"

However, although the whole Church is a missionary Church, that does not mean that there are only "pioneer vocations" (men whom Fr Peyriguère calls "the messengers of the Christ who cannot yet give his name"). The pioneer's vocation is one thing, the militant's in Catholic Action is another, and another still that of the mother of a family. We must distinguish between these different sorts of vocation while we must rediscover the spirit of catholicity, of universality.

Yet at this time of growing missionary awareness, we must all listen to the call to the premission which, as Mgr Maury has said, "is an effort towards Christian penetration among the masses estranged from Christianity, a penetration adapted

to the needs of a generation more impressed by our witness than our speeches".

THE PREMISSION IN THE FUTURE: THE ADVENT OF THE NATIONS

We have listened to these pioneers who are also mystics and we have come to understand better the age-old sense of a word which for too long has been synonymous with "closed shop" in certain Christian circles. It is the noble word *Catholic.*

We Catholics have lived with a quiet conscience amid age-old confusions between our faith and our ideologies, love of others and our personal prejudices. We have confused our own interests with those of the Church. On the site, the builders of the new city have grown accustomed to our absence. But now a new era is arousing us from our torpor and bringing to maturity a generation of Christians who are to be found wherever men of goodwill work side by side.

It is because she knows that she is Catholic that the Church desires to be missionary. She intends to continue without ceasing a dialogue with those "spiritual worlds" which are attempting together with her to establish their status in this new world.

With Fr Congar "we understand by *spiritual worlds* in the broadest sense, a complex of ideas, values and commitments in the sphere of conscience, of such a nature that a man may build his life thereon with the ultimate prospect of a final objective in the spiritual order". To limit ourselves to contemporary history, the world of the proletariat, the scientific world, the secularist, humanist world in our own part of the globe, and on the other hand the spiritual worlds of the Jew, the Mohammedan and the Hindu, are now brought to the point, in a world of generalized communications, where they engage in a dialogue with the different Christian denominations by means of exchanges of views, mutual esteem, and

an understanding renewed by contact with the sources of a respect for humanity which they all share. Further (to quote again from Fr Congar): "The ecumenical movement in the twentieth century is a new phenomenon issuing from a new experience among those who engage in it . . . The meeting of any two Christian communions can no longer be separated from the general problem of the divisions between Christians and from the context in which Christians, together and even transcending their divisions, are seeking to be linked again everywhere in unity."

These "spiritual worlds" and their many offshoots, together with an ecumenical movement unique in history, are influencing in every way the mighty body of humanity at long last aware of its unity. Even if this unity is still only a dream, we all are conscious of what the brotherhood of mankind would be, with each nation contributing its best qualities and for love of all the others; a human race in which there would be a union between the patience of the Chinese, the delicacy of the Japanese, the Hindu's gift for contemplation, the Negro's profoundly human power of expression and his child-like wonder, the Anglo-Saxon's flair for organization and technology and the clarity of the French genius.

This universality among the nations is seeking to come to light through international institutions, it is being forged by a more unified way of thinking, feeling and living. Thus it is on a par though not identical with the quest for that unity among God's children which has already been achieved in Jesus Christ.

A new, necessary, yet dangerous solidarity is a foretaste for men of the unity whose accomplishment was inaugurated once and for all by Christ as the firstborn of a redeemed people.

Since Christ, who has already come as a man among men and at the time appointed by God, is still to come in a spiritual sense, so long as it remains true that he has not been

fully manifested to the whole human race, today is the time of the advent of the nations in relation to the Church.[13]

BEYOND THE DIAGNOSES OF THE SOCIOLOGISTS

The Church's eyes are open and she has no intention of shutting them to the fact that the task is immense. She frankly admits with Cardinal Costantini that "for many centuries past the Church has succeeded in establishing foreign missions, but not herself".

Mgr Cardijn, founder of the Young Christian Workers, wrote as follows after his return from a long journey through Asia:

> These proletarian masses, which today are powerless, will tomorrow become the arbiters of order, progress and peace. Only the blind are unaware of this. No technological power can prevent this Asiatic population from deciding tomorrow the future of the world. The coloured races will determine the future of the whites.
>
> The Church is now "established" in the majority of the countries of the Asiatic continent with her hierarchy, her clergy, her rites, but the work that remains to be done is immense.
>
> In fact, the Asiatic block as such has not really been touched. Christians remain on the fringe, on the edge, to one side, sometimes even at a distance. They are not yet the leaven in the lump.

[13] As a complement to this vision of the salvation of the nations it is as well that the faith of Christians should clearly state, as does Fr Daniélou, that "The mystery of the Blessed Virgin lies in the fact that she was in the world before Jesus. This brings us to the specifically missionary aspect of the Marian mystery.... Among pagan peoples the Church does not exist. Hence before pagan nations are converted to Christ, before a local Church becomes viable and established among them, there is a mysterious sense in which Mary is among them preparing for and prefiguring the Church. Her presence is a kind of foreshadowing of what the Church herself will be."

> Efforts to prepare a native lay movement must be intensified, for tomorrow it is the laity who will have to undertake the task of finding answers to the needs of these peoples and of demonstrating the value of a native Church in India, Japan and the whole of South East Asia.

The "demographic explosion" is most widespread in Asia, while its force is at its greatest in South America. Sociologists have calculated that if in the year 2000 the 600 million Latin Americans are Catholics, they will then exceed in number the Catholics of Western and Eastern Europe by 100 million. But a report drawn up by the Pan-American Catholic Action secretariat in Santiago de Chili, states: "The operative word is 'if'. Everything depends on one 'detail'. This 'detail' is that, if the present economic and social institutions are maintained, the temporal conditions required for an effective penetration by Catholicism and for the development of Christian life will disappear within the next forty years and perhaps before."

"Has Christianity still a chance?" asked Karl Rahner in a pamphlet which has excited considerable interest.[14] His own answer puts the believer in the only possible situation for a missionary Church. There is no denying that the human race is increasing in numbers more rapidly than the total of converted pagans. We have to admit that God is officially banished from a secularized world. In our old tired Europe the Church in ourselves seems tired and all the more so because paganism has been given a legal status. And, still according to Karl Rahner, we go on defending historical façades, the rights and customs of a public life, a State and a civilization which used to be Christian. Yet we feel, although we do not admit it, that we no longer have the right to do this since these prerogatives no longer correspond to the number of real Christians. Are we then, in line with the logic of the pessimistic diagnoses of the sociologists and the historians, to conclude that "our struggle to get official Catholic

[14] Karl Rahner, *Free Speech in the Church* (London, Sheed and Ward, 1959).

Christianity recognized and accepted in the tangible reality of the world and our own history . . . will end in anything but failure?"

This formula which, as Karl Rahner says, is succinct and theologically accurate, raises the essential question which we must face if we are to have an exact understanding of the facts of the situation for a missionary Church. The author's own answer deserves our attention if Christians as a body are to recover the hope which inspired the first apostles. "Faith means including God in one's scheme of things. . . . If we are Christians we are called upon to put all our trust in God, in God alone, without working out in advance whether our faith has any chance or not . . . 'unpropitious facts' are not an obstacle . . . to people who really believe."

The fact remains that the time has come for a great advance into the pagan world. It must be both a collective forward movement on the part of the Church in her missionary endeavour and a "Catholic" attitude in every Christian conscience.

Ultimately it is in the individual conscience that contemporary unbelief takes up its abode. St John reminds us that sin is the primal unbelief, sin is our own form of incredulity.

Each man is a mission territory. The missionary problem lies within the conscience of every Christian.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

In this series:

BORNE, Etienne: *Modern Atheism*; CHAMBRE, Henri, S.J.: *Christianity and Communism*; HOLLIS, Christopher: *The Church and Economics*; MILLOT, René P.: *Missions in the World Today*; RÉTIF, André, S.J.: *The Catholic Spirit*; VAULX, Bernard de: *History of the Missions.*

CONGAR, Y. M.-J., O.P.: *Lay People in the Church*, London, Geoffrey Chapman, 2nd edn 1960, and Westminster, Md, Newman Press, 1957.

COUTURIER, C., S.J.: *The Mission of the Church*, London, Longmans, and Baltimore, Helicon, 1959.

DANIÉLOU, J., S.J.: *The Salvation of the Nations*, London and New York, Sheed and Ward, 1949.

FREMANTLE, Anne: *Desert Calling* (a biography of Charles de Foucauld), London, Hollis and Carter, and New York, Henry Holt, 1949.

HOFINGER, Johannes, S.J.: *Liturgy and the Missions*, London, Burns Oates, and New York, Kenedy, 1960.

LOEW, M. R., O.P.: *Mission to the Poorest*, London and New York, Sheed and Ward, 1951.

LUBAC, Henri de, S.J.: *Catholicism, a Study of Dogma in Relation to the Corporate Destiny of Mankind*, translated by Lancelot C. Sheppard, London, Burns Oates, and New York, Sheed and Ward, 1950.

MICHONNEAU, G.: *Revolution in a City Parish*, London, Bloomsbury, and Westminster, Md, Newman Press, 1950; *Missionary Spirit in Parish Life*, Westminster, Md, Newman Press, 1952.

RAHNER, Karl: *Free Speech in the Church*, London and New York, Sheed and Ward, 1959.

SHEPPARD, Lancelot C.: *Charles de Foucauld*, Dublin, Clonmore and Reynolds, 1958.

SUHARD, Emmanuel: *The Priest in the Modern World*, published in *Modern Life*, The Monthly Review of the Workers' Apostolate, Vol. 5, no. 1, London, 1950; *The Church Today*, Chicago, Fides, 1952.

WARD, Maisie: *France Pagan?* London and New York, Sheed and Ward, 1950.

The Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism

The number of each volume indicates its place in the over-all series and not the order of publication.

PART ONE: KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH

1. What Does Man Know?
2. Is Theology a Science?
3. The Meaning of Tradition
4. The Foundations of Faith
5. Do Dogmas Change?
6. What is Faith?
7. God's Word to Man
8. Myth or Mystery?
9. What is a Miracle?
10. Is There a Christian Philosophy?
11. Early Christian Philosophy
12. Medieval Christian Philosophy
13. The Basis of Belief
14. Christianity and Science
15. The God of Reason

PART TWO: THE BASIC TRUTHS

16. The Worship of God
17. What is the Trinity?
18. The Holy Spirit
19. In the Hands of the Creator
20. The Problem of Evil
21. Who is the Devil?
22. Freedom and Providence
23. The Theology of Grace
24. What is the Incarnation?
25. What is Redemption?
26. The Communion of Saints
27. Faith, Hope and Charity
28. Life After Death

PART THREE: THE NATURE OF MAN

29. The Origins of Man
30. Evolution
31. What is Man?
32. What is Life?
33. What is Psychology?
34. Man in his Environment
35. Man and Metaphysics
36. Psychical Phenomena

PART FOUR: THE MEANS OF REDEMPTION

37. Prayer
38. The Nature of Mysticism
39. Spiritual Writers of the Early Church
40. Spiritual Writers of the Middle Ages
41. Post-Reformation Spirituality
42. Spirituality in Modern Times
43. What are Indulgences?
44. Mary The Mother of God
45. The Marian Cult
46. What is a Saint?
47. What is an Angel?

PART FIVE: THE LIFE OF FAITH

48. What is the Church?
49. What is a Sacrament?
50. Christian Initiation
51. Penance and Absolution
52. What is the Eucharist?
53. What is a Priest?
54. Christian Marriage
55. Death and the Christian
56. What is Christian Life?
57. Christian Social Teaching
58. World Morality
59. Christianity and Money

PART SIX: THE WORD OF GOD

60. What is the Bible?
61. The Promised Land
62. Biblical Archaeology
63. Biblical Criticism
64. God's People in the Bible
65. The Religion of Israel
66. The Prophets
67. How Do We Know Jesus?
68. The Life of Our Lord
69. What is the Good News?
70. St. Paul and His Message
71. What the Old Testament does not Tell Us
72. The New Testament Apocrypha
73. Judaism

PART SEVEN: THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

74. Christian Beginnings
75. The Dawn of the Middle Ages
76. The Early Middle Ages
77. The Later Middle Ages
78. The Revolt against the Church
79. The Church in the Modern Age

PART EIGHT: THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

80. What is Canon Law?
81. The Papacy
82. The Ecumenical Councils
83. What is a Bishop?
84. The Christian Priesthood
85. Religious Orders of Men
86. Religious Orders of Women
87. Secular Institutes
88. The Catholic Spirit

PART NINE: THE CHURCH AND THE MODERN WORLD

89. Church and State
90. Christianity and Economics
91. Atheism
92. To be assigned
93. Psychiatry and the Christian
94. Christianity and the Machine Age
95. Christianity and the Space Age
96. Christianity and Communism
97. Christianity and Colonialism
98. The Church Works Through Her Saints
99. History of the Missions
100. Missions in the World Today
101. Religious Sociology
102. The Church's Mission in the World
103. The Church and Sex
104. The Workers of the Church
105. Christian Charity in Action
106. Christianity and Education
107. Why We Believe

PART TEN: THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH

108. The Spirit of Worship
109. The Books of Worship
110. History of the Mass
111. The Mass in the West
112. Eastern Liturgies
113. The Christian Calendar
114. Vestments and Church Furniture

PART ELEVEN: CATHOLICISM AND LITERATURE

115. What is a Christian Writer?
116. Sacred Languages
117. Christian Humanism
118. To be assigned
119. Modern Christian Literature

PART TWELVE: CATHOLICISM AND THE ARTS

120. The Christian Meaning of Art
121. Early Christian Art
122. Church Building
123. Christian Painting and Sculpture
124. Christian Theatre
125. Christian Music
126. Motion Pictures, Radio and Television

PART THIRTEEN: CATHOLICISM AND SCIENCE

127. Embryo and Anima
128. Nuclear Physics in Peace and War
129. Medicine and Morals
130. Science and Religion
131. To be assigned
132. To be assigned
133. To be assigned

PART FOURTEEN: OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

134. Judaism and the Law
135. The Spirit of Eastern Orthodoxy
136. Heresies and Heretics
137. Protestantism
138. Christian Unity
139. Christian Sects

PART FIFTEEN: NON-CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

140. Primitive Religions
141. Religions of the Ancient East
142. Greco-Roman Religion
143. Mohammedanism
144. Hinduism
145. Buddhism
146. Mystery Cults
147. Superstition
148. The Rationalists

PART SIXTEEN: GENERAL AND SUPPLEMENTARY VOLUMES

149. Why I am a Christian
150. Index

All titles are subject to change.

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

134 393

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY